

2 win Nobel Medicine Prize

STOCKHOLM (R) — Two scientists, one Australian and the other Swiss, were Monday awarded the Nobel Medicine Prize for a discovery 23 years ago that gives hope for treatment of such diseases as cancer, diabetes and AIDS. Australian Peter Doherty, 55, and Swiss Rolf Zinkernagel, 52, received the prestigious award, worth \$1.12 million, for joint work at the John Curtin School of Medical Research in Canberra, Australia, between 1973 and 1975. "It's a fantastic feeling...I'm still in a state of shock. It is a tremendous recognition," Doherty told Reuters from Memphis, Tennessee, where he works at a cancer hospital. Mr. Zinkernagel, a graduate student at the time of the find, was delighted by the award but said it was only the first step. "We know so little still that there is enough work to keep me busy for the coming years and decades," said Mr. Zinkernagel, head of Zurich University's Experimental Immunology Institute.

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Police respect for public helps security — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday visited the headquarters of the police patrol units and urged officers to double their efforts in serving the public. Respect of citizens and dealing with the public in a civilised manner helps to promote the security situation and strengthens mutual confidence between police and people, he said in a short address. Strengthened confidence will also help enhance the rule of the law, said the Regent, who paid tribute to the Public Security Department for its services.

25 Hamas members freed from prison

RAMALLAH (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) released 25 political prisoners belonging to the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, Palestinian security sources said Monday. The Hamas members, who had been in prison for several months, were freed Sunday night, the sources said. Hamas sources confirmed the release. Among those released were five out of 10 students from Bir Zeit University outside Ramallah, imprisoned since February, who the Palestinian supreme court had ordered freed last August. The security sources said around 20 political prisoners remain in Ramallah prison.

Hizbollah hits Israeli-allied militia

SIDON (AFP) — Guerrillas of the Iran-backed Hizbollah militia Monday attacked a South Lebanon Army (SLA) patrol and position in the South Lebanon border zone occupied by the SLA's ally, Israel, security sources said. The Hizbollah guerrillas detonated an explosive charge as an SLA militia patrol proceeded along a road linking the villages of Aalman and Deir Siryan inside Israel's self-declared "security zone," just north of the Jewish state, the sources said. A Hizbollah source told AFP that "an SLA tank was destroyed and its crew members were killed or wounded." Immediately afterwards, the guerrillas fired mortars at a militia post in Aalman, the security sources said. "The rockets set the post afire and a number of ambulances were seen evacuating casualties," the Hizbollah source said. Independent sources did not provide information about casualties. Israeli artillery retaliated by pounding with 155 mm shells locations along the Litani River as well as the outskirts of the village of Froun, security sources said.

Blasts rock British HQ in N. Ireland

BELFAST (AP) — Two explosions rocked the British army's headquarters in northern Ireland on Monday, sending up clouds of black smoke. Six casualties — four men and two women — suffering from head and leg injuries arrived at Lagan Valley Hospital, James Livingstone, hospital spokesman said. "Sadly, early indications were that we could anticipate upwards of 20 casualties," he said. He could not say if they were military or civilian casualties. The blast shook homes in Lishurn, a town southwest of Belfast. Smoke could be seen over the heavily fortified army installation as ambulances headed to the scene, and helicopters hovered overhead.

Palestinians, Israelis seek to salvage peace process

Netanyahu 'ready for final status talks' after Hebron issue settled; talks at Beit Hanoun continue

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday he was prepared to open stalled final-status talks with the Palestinians once the issue of the West Bank town of Hebron is resolved.

"My central objective is to launch final-status negotiations once we have resolved the question of Hebron and other issues," Mr. Netanyahu told a session of the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

"We will be guided by the principle that we must give the maximum amount of freedom to the Palestinians and the maximum amount of security for Israelis," he said.

In his policy speech marking the opening of parliament's winter session, Mr. Netanyahu sharply attacked the Palestinians, saying they tried to use violence as a means to pressure Israel.

"If every crisis and every frustration is justification for violence, then the process is doomed," said Mr. Netanyahu, who was frequently heckled by Israeli Arab legislators.

He accused the Palestinians of repeatedly violating the accords, including by opening fire on Israeli soldiers last month, but was carefully not to attack Yasser Arafat by name.

He said there was a consensus in Israel on the form of a final resolution of the conflict with the Palestinians between "both those for and against creation of a Palestinian state, ruling out the extreme left."

The prime minister was referring to an Israeli majority including members of his own right wing and the leftist Labour Party which would accept some Palestinian entity as long as it had no true army and no sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Final status talks had a single opening session in May just before Mr. Netanyahu's election but they have not been held since his victory.

The talks, which Pales-



Two sisters of Raed Ragheb, a Palestinian policeman who was died on Monday after being wounded in the last wave of clashes with Israeli soldiers at Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, mourn during his funeral (Reuters photo)

EU wants to help peace process politically and economically — Spring

CAIRO (AFP) — Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring said here on Monday that the European Union (EU) wanted to help push forward the Middle East peace process "politically and economically."

"The message to the Israelis is that Europe wants to be helpful and wants to participate, that it wants to see concrete steps be taken to implement the peace process," Mr. Spring told reporters after talks with Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

"It wants to be helpful economically and politically," Mr. Spring said.

Mr. Spring's visit to Egypt, during which he was also to meet President Hosni Mubarak, is the last leg of a tour of Israel and

Gaza where he had talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

"We have emphasised that we want to be helpful in the process, that we want to see steps taken, concrete steps that show the world that the peace process is on track, that there is momentum in the peace process and I have reflected that concern to all the parties," Mr. Spring said.

"I'll be hopeful that the negotiations which started last evening in Erez can now show the world that they have the capacity to move on and to implement the actual accords signed"

Arafat, Weizman hold talks today

OCCUPIED Jerusalem (AP) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman and Yasser Arafat are arranging to meet in Israel, and the Palestinian leader said the talks might be held Tuesday.

Israeli media said the meeting would be held in Mr. Weizman's villa in the Mediterranean resort of Caesarea in northern Israel.

It would only be Mr. Arafat's second trip to Israel since he returned from exile to take the helm of the Palestinian self-rule government in the West Bank and Gaza strip in July 1994.

In November 1995, Mr. Arafat secretly visited the widow of Yitzhak Rabin to express his condolences after Rabin's assassination.

Asked about a possible meeting, Mr. Arafat said Monday: "I may be meeting with President Weizman tomorrow." Mr. Weizman's spokeswoman, Batya Keinan, had no immediate comment.

The meeting would come two days after Israelis and Palestinians resumed peace talks that have been faltering since the May election victory of Israel's hardline leader, Benjamin Netanyahu.

The sides returned to the table following deadly clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police in the West Bank and Gaza Strip last month.

The radio said Mr. Arafat and Mr. Weizman had dis-

Aziz says Baghdad regained north Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said on Monday that his country's backing of its new Kurdish ally had regained the north as part of Iraq.

"Last August's events have proved that the north with its people is part of Iraq," said Mr. Aziz at the opening of a conference for Iraqi expatriates living in Europe and the U.S.

Iraqi troops in late August backed rebels of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) led by Masoud Barzani against its rivals the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani, helping Mr. Barzani take control over Iraqi Kurdistan. The move prompted the United States to fire cruise missile against Iraq.

"Without Iraq, the state of Iraq and the leadership of Iraq, its (the north's) fate would be anarchy, bloodshed, destruction and the domination of the foreigner's control and manipulation," Mr. Aziz said.

Mr. Aziz described the post-1991 Gulf war period — when Kurds established a self-rule autonomy with

the help of a U.S.-led air protection force — until the KDP's military triumph as "years of spending a lot of finance in active conspiracies to dismantle the north from the rest of the country."

Mr. Aziz also harshly attacked the United States, criticising its missile strikes last month against his country and blaming it for prolonging trade sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"The unjust embargo... is no more an international decision issued by the so called international legitimacy, rather it is a stand imposed by America on the (U.N.) Security Council," he said.

The U.N. trade sanctions, imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait, include a ban on oil exports and imports of all goods except food and medicine, for which Iraq has no cash to pay.

Last May Iraq signed an oil-for-food deal with the U.N., allowing it partial oil sales worth \$2 billion every six months to buy food and

Qadhafi's support of Kurdish state sparks political trouble for Erbakan

ANKARA (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's Islamist foreign policy lay in shambles on Monday thanks to an untimely outburst by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

The opposition urged the prime minister to step down after Colonel Qadhafi slammed Turkey's Western leanings and treatment of its Kurds at a joint news conference with Mr. Erbakan in Libya.

"Mr. Erbakan should return to Turkey without wasting any time. He should go straight from the airport to Cankaya (presidential palace) and submit his resignation," Anatolian news agency quoted opposition leader Mesut Yilmaz as saying.

Mr. Yilmaz's Motherland Party (ANAP) asked for a parliamentary debate on Mr. Erbakan's foreign trips after Col. Qadhafi touched Turkey's rawest nerve by calling for a Kurdish state to be formed.

Mr. Erbakan "has damaged Turkey's credibility, trustworthiness and seriousness by continuous and persistent foreign policy mistakes," the party said in a written request to parliament.

The prime minister, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member Turkey's first Islamist leader, arrived in outcast state Nigeria on Monday, on the last leg of a controversial three-country tour including Egypt.

He had defied a warning from Washington and advice from his professional diplomats to stay away from Libya and Nigeria, both shunned by the West.

"Kurdistan should be established" Turkey's Milliyet daily quoted Col. Qadhafi as saying at Sunday's news conference. Mr. Erbakan sat beside the Libyan leader in an awkward silence, it said.

Turkey recalls envoy

TURKEY RECALLED its ambassador to Libya for talks on Monday after Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi levelled sharp criticisms against the country, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement here.

"The (Turkish) ambassador in Tripoli was temporarily called back to Ankara for consultations because of Libyan leader Qadhafi's 'saddening statement,'" the statement said.

"I am talking about the Kurdish nation. This nation should have its place under the Middle Eastern sun," Col. Qadhafi said.

Turkey, fighting with separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels for the last 12 years, cracks down hard on Kurdish nationalism. Advocating a Kurdish state is illegal in Turkey.

The Libya visit was the most serious in a string of let-downs for Mr. Erbakan in a bid to take the country closer to the Arab and Muslim World since coming to office in June.

Baghdad's military drive into the Kurdish north of Iraq in August put paid to Mr. Erbakan's plans for regional security cooperation with neighbours Iran, Iraq and Syria.

"We are not surprised by what happened," a Turkish Foreign Ministry official told Reuters, referring to Col. Qadhafi.

"Some people think that flaunting an Islamic identity is enough to have good relations with Muslim countries," he said.

PNA: Israel blocks Internet access

RAMALLAH (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) accused Israel on Monday of blocking service to the Internet for Palestinians during the flare-up of violence in the territories late last month. The Palestinian Information Ministry said in a statement that Israeli authorities "instructed Bezeq, the Israeli state telephone company, to cut off the territories to prevent access to the Internet." It said Palestinians had been using the Internet to "inform the world of Israel's illegal activities in Jerusalem," which "Israel did not approve of and did not want the world to see, so they cut off access to the net." The statement cited disruptions in service to Palestinians throughout the violence in late September. Bezeq, whose telephone lines are used in the territories as in Israel itself to access the Internet, denied the charges, saying it "does not supply Internet services and therefore cannot cut them off."

Regent: Jerusalem events of grave anxiety but also a chance to present issue to world

AMMAN (J.T.) — While the recent developments in Arab East Jerusalem following Israel's opening of a new entrance to a controversial tunnel were of grave anxiety to Jordan, they also gave the Kingdom an opportunity to address the issue of the Holy City to the whole world. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Monday.

The Regent, speaking during a visit to the Al Ra'i newspaper, also called for the setting up of a data bank on all issues related to Jerusalem and the implementation of agreements on the ground.

"We should establish a data-base information project under the title 'Jerusalem in the Conscience,'" he said.

Israel's opening of the new entrance to the tunnel and the Palestinian-Israeli clashes it triggered were of "grave anxiety" to Jordan, the Regent said. At the same time, these developments "also provided us with an opportunity to place the issue (of the Holy City) in front of the whole world," he said.

The Crown Prince underlined the importance of gaining international support for Arab causes and the Arab identity. The Regent also called on the Jordanian press to comprehensively address national issues and make Jordan a centre of knowledge and information base.

He urged objectivity without excesses in the media while dealing with issues such as unemployment, poverty and national aid.

The Crown Prince emphasised the vital role of the press in dealing with the various dimensions of Arab life.

"Life changes around us and Jordan is affected by the surroundings and events that the region faces," he pointed out. "The Kingdom is a home and not a passageway for events in the region. Jordan never deals with any event

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan warns against renegotiating accords

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan on Monday warned against any renegotiation of agreements already reached between Israel and the Palestinians and emphasised that immediate focus be given to the implementation of the accords and resumption of final status negotiations.

According to Information Minister Marwan Muasher Jordan also informed Israel of its concern over the Jewish state's failure to inform the Kingdom of its decision to reopen a new entrance to a controversial tunnel that runs near Islamic holy shrines in Arab East Jerusalem.

The minister, addressing a weekly press briefing, pointed out that Israel, in the October 1994 peace treaty with Jordan, recog-

nised the Kingdom's "special role" in the Islamic holy shrines in Arab East Jerusalem and, as such, was duty-bound to inform Amman of any move related to the shrines.

"We regret very much that Israel did not inform us" of the move to open the new entrance to the tunnel "despite the presence in Amman of a senior Israeli envoy 24 hours before the opening," said Dr. Muasher.

The minister was referring to the visit to Amman of Dore Gold, an advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on Sept. 23, one day before the opening of the tunnel entrance.

His Majesty King Hussein met with Mr. Gold and officials said the discussions covered outstanding

(Continued on page 7)

Taleban push against Masood is stalemated

GOLBAHAR (Agencies) — A Taleban offensive against the valley stronghold of Ahmad Shah Masood stalled on Monday after running into resistance from Afghanistan's ousted military chief a few hundred metres into the gorge.

The Talebans urged a powerful northern Uzbek chief on Monday to stay out of their fight with the ousted government military chief and help bring peace to a country ravaged by 17 years of war.

Acting Foreign Minister Mullah Mohammad Ghous said it appeared Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum was prepared to back Mr. Masood, now battling to keep Taleban fighters out of his Panjshir Valley base north of Kabul.

The British Broadcasting

Corporation (BBC) quoted Gen. Dostum, who runs six northern provinces from the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, as saying he would come to the help of any compatriot under attack unless the Taleban stopped fighting, an apparent reference to Mr. Masood.

"Now it seems that they are interested in joining together to take action against the Taleban. If Gen. Dostum realises this aim, it will be a great mistake," said Mr. Ghous, whose government has said it has no quarrel with Gen. Dostum.

He called on both Gen. Dostum and Mr. Masood to accept a general amnesty offer and assured Mr. Masood, widely regarded as one of the best guerrilla

(Continued on page 7)

Blockade may be eased, but Jerusalem remains forbidden to Palestinians

HIZMA, the West Bank (AP) — Mohammad Ali Helou recalls the parts of Jerusalem he cleaned for 23 years — the Old City, Jaffa Road, the Jewish neighbourhood of Romema. His birth certificate is on record in the Holy City, and he still has money in a bank there.

But he lives in Hizma, a Palestinian village about a minute's drive from Jerusalem that is a casualty of geography and ideology, the two axes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The 4,000 people here, like nearly all Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, are barred from entering a city they consider their capital.

Hizma's exclusion is especially poignant, though. It is ringed by the red roofs and shining stones of growing Jewish neighbourhoods built in an area occupied in the 1967 Mideast war but considered by Israel to be part of Jerusalem.

Hizma, on the other hand, was declared part of the West Bank, effectively cutting off trade, jobs, even ties between families that bound the village to Jerusalem for centuries.

"We're like an island in the middle of the sea," said Mr. Helou, squinting into the sun as he points to the five settlements. "We're surrounded on all sides by water."

Although the Israeli government is easing a siege that prevented travel between West Bank towns after last week's gunbattles, the blockade that forbids Palestinians from entering Israel and Jerusalem is expected to stay in place.

Israel calls the closure a matter of security. It was imposed permanently after a suicide bombing by militants in January 1995 as part of a plan to separate Palestinians and Israelis.

Before that, except during short-lived closures, Palestinians freely crossed into Israel and Jerusalem. Many

Israelis fear restoring that freedom would only make it easier to carry out more attacks.

But it is transforming the life of Palestinians, as well, making permanent a divide that many hoped peace would end.

Arah East Jerusalem is the political and spiritual centre of the West Bank. Al Aqsa Mosque is one of Islam's holiest shrines and the city serves as the centre of Palestinian intellectual life. Its businesses still exert influence over Arab commerce, and Palestinians want it as the capital of a future state.

But to travel there, a Palestinian must get a travel permit from the Israeli military, which rarely comes, residents say.

Even in quiet times, when the closure is eased, no more than 60,000 Palestinians have been allowed to enter, and only then with work permits, Israeli officials say.

"Peace means that someone is free, there's stability, you go where you want. This is peace," said Fawaz Irshid, a 60-year-old retired villager standing in front of a dreary grocery store. "But living in the middle of a prison, is that peace?"

Three roads leave Hizma, one to Ramallah, one to Jericho and one to Jerusalem. With the road blocked to Jerusalem, the village is forced to forge ties — however, reluctantly — with more-distant Ramallah, one of the main towns under Palestinian self-rule.

But the ties to Jerusalem persist. Peeling posters from Palestinian elections in January advertise candidates from the "constituency of Jerusalem." The telephone prefix is Jerusalem, not Ramallah.

To get papers for a passport, villagers must go to East Jerusalem. Land deeds and other records remain there.

"I was a son of Jerusalem. I don't know Ramallah," Mr.

Helou said.

Throughout the West Bank, only parts of which are under Palestinian rule, forbidding travel to Jerusalem makes for everything from petty inconveniences to different routines.

Bethlehem and Ramallah are separated by 20 kilometres through Jerusalem. But with the closure, it's now an hour's drive along a stomach-churning, winding road that goes deep into the West Bank along a route known as "the Valley of Fire."

Three Israeli checkpoints interrupt the trip through the West Bank's soft hills and along its crumbling stone terraces.

At each stop, Palestinians turn over their orange identity cards to soldiers. Sometimes they are forced to get out. Often, the driver is ordered to open the trunk for soldiers to search.

"It's just a short way to Jerusalem, but we go like this, and we go like that," said 70-year-old Ali Deek, waving his hand in semicircles. "This is forbidden and that's permitted."

"By foot it takes an hour," he said, pointing to the city's skyline from the taxi's window. "And by car it takes an hour."

Keeping off limits Al Aqsa Mosque is particularly troubling to Palestinians like Mr. Deek, a Muslim who is fond of quoting the Koran.

The explosion of violence that followed the opening of an archaeological tunnel near the compound was in part a reflection of Palestinians' sense that they are losing a say over the city.

It mirrors a claustrophobia and disappointment felt everywhere. "When there was no peace it was better," said Abdul Majid, a 27-year-old in Hizma. "During the uprising, I could go straight to Jerusalem and work without any problem."

"Now, most of us here just play cards," he said.



An Israeli army paratrooper holds his assault rifle behind a sandbag position in Hebron as some Jewish children watch on Monday after Israel on Sunday lifted a curfew on the Palestinians living in the town during last month's clashes (Reuters photo)

EgyptAir hijacker sentenced in U.S.

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. federal judge on Monday sentenced Lebanese-born Palestinian Omar Mohammad Ali Rezaq to life in prison for the 1985 hijacking of an EgyptAir Athens-Cairo flight in which 58 people were killed.

Calling the crime "heinous and cold-blooded," Federal Judge Royce Lamberth said he would recommend that Rezaq, 38, never win parole. Rezaq was a member of the Abu Nidal group.

Judge Lamberth also ordered Rezaq to pay \$264,000 in compensation to some of the victims' families.

In a statement to the judge, Rezaq said he did not believe he was a bad man and he was not born to kill. "I ask God to bless all those people. I ask God to make peace in my country. I ask God for peace in Palestine," he said.

Rezaq shot five people in the head at point-blank range, killing two women whose autopsy pictures the prosecutor pointed to as he asked Mr. Lamberth for the maximum sentence.

UAE reports 144,979 illegal workers have left

DUBAI (R) — More than 144,000 illegal workers have left the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ahead of a new law cracking down on unlawful foreign labour, an Interior Ministry spokesman said on Monday.

The spokesman, quoted by the official news agency WAM, said that 144,979 illegal workers had left the UAE by Sunday night.

He urged all other illegal workers to leave by the end of October, the deadline the government had set for illegal aliens to leave or legalise their stay.

The original two-month amnesty period had expired at the end of September, but the government extended it to give the workers more time to organise their departure and find seats on congested aircraft and ships.

UAE officials had estimated that some 140,000 illegal workers will depart

during the three-month amnesty. Diplomats say as many as 200,000 could leave by the end of October.

The government has said illegal aliens are a threat to the UAE's security.

Thousands of foreign workers — primarily from the Indian subcontinent but also from Southeast Asia — have been rushing to leave the UAE by plane and ship to avoid tough penalties when the new law takes effect on November 1.

If they are caught after the deadline, they face punishment including fines, prison terms and deportation.

Foreigners make up about 75 per cent of the 2.4 million population in the small Gulf Arab state. Many came to the Gulf legally, but broke the law by failing to leave when their visas expired or working for employers other than their sponsors.

Scientists study world's oldest amber in Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — Amber found in the mountains of Lebanon has been confirmed as the oldest in the world dating back 125 million years and insects trapped in it could lead to new scientific advances, a Lebanese scientist said on Monday.

The amber contains insects, some of them now extinct, and plants far older than those found in Baltic amber which dates back 35 million years, Professor Georges Tohme, head of Lebanon's National Council for Scientific Research told Reuters.

Amber is a hard yellowish to brownish translucent fossil resin valued throughout history for making ornaments such as beads and necklaces. It sometimes contains insects and plants trapped inside before the resin hardened millions of years ago.

Prof. Tohme said teams of Lebanese and French scientists had been set up to study the insects in the amber, whose age was confirmed by French scientists earlier this year.

Some remains of plants were also trapped in the amber. "This might be the first thread to understanding the beginnings of plants with flowers," Prof. Tohme said.

A Lebanese university student named Dany Azar sparked the discovery when he collected thousands of tiny samples of Lebanese amber and took them with him when he went to study in Paris in 1989.

Mr. Azar's French professors took interest in the samples and they told Lebanese authorities earlier this year that studies at the Université de Paris Sud in Orsay concluded that the amber dated back 125 million years.

"Polish, Russian and Baltic amber were believed to be the

most ancient insectified resin dating back to the Jurassic age some 35 million years ago. Now it has been established that the Lebanese, which is 125 million years old, is the oldest," Prof. Tohme said.

The insects trapped in Mr. Azar's amber are of "exceptional freshness" and belong to extinct species, Michel Solignac, a professor of genetics and evolution, told Prof. Tohme in a letter dated July 8, 1996.

Prof. Tohme declined to identify the site where the amber was found, saying it had to be protected.

Study of the insects could help lead to a new understanding of the history and evolution of insects, which make up 90 per cent of all living beings, Prof. Tohme said.

The insects trapped inside offered scientists the chance to study ancient DNA which

NEWS IN BRIEF

Olmert agrees to have immunity lifted

TEL AVIV (AP) — Ehud Olmert, the Israeli mayor of Jerusalem and a member of parliament from the governing Likud Party, agreed Monday to have his parliamentary immunity lifted, clearing the way for his prosecution. Mr. Olmert has denied any wrongdoing in connection with a financial scandal dating back to 1988. Municipality spokeswoman Jill Holtzman said the mayor, through his lawyer Yigal Armon, told the parliamentary house committee, which deals with procedural matters, that he would agree to have the immunity removed. Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair said in June that he would prosecute Mr. Olmert for suspected involvement in creating false receipts and other misdeeds during the Likud Party's election campaign eight years ago, when Mr. Olmert was party treasurer. Mr. Olmert has said that he did not guide, instruct or initiate any action aimed at disguising contributions to Likud.

'Two Iranians killed in Kuwaiti jail'

KUWAIT (R) — Two Iranians were killed and 13 other prisoners were wounded in a clash in a Kuwaiti prison, the Arab Times reported on Monday. It quoted sources close to the central prison as saying that guns were used in the Sunday night clash between prisoners belonging to Kuwait's Mutairi tribe and Iranian inmates. Interior Ministry and Farwaniya Hospital officials denied late on Sunday that such a clash had happened. "This is a rumour. Nothing happened," a hospital official told Reuters as a man lying on a stretcher was taken to the emergency unit surrounded by heavily armed officers. Reporters were asked to leave the hospital. A man claiming to be a prisoner with access to a mobile telephone told Reuters earlier on Monday that the clash erupted in the narcotics ward. He said Kuwaiti inmates attacked the Iranian prisoners on Sunday night following tension the previous day between the two groups.

Greenpeace says Lebanon bars its ship

BEIRUT (R) — Greenpeace said on Monday Lebanon had refused entry to one of its ships but a government minister said he had only expressed reservations about the planned visit. "Authorities in Beirut have denied permission for a Greenpeace ship to visit Lebanon. No official reason was given," Greenpeace Mediterranean spokesman Fouad Hamdan said in a statement. The Arctic Sunrise carrying environmental activists was set to arrive on Thursday for six days to spread awareness on ecological issues in Lebanon and the Mediterranean, Mr. Hamdan said. "Environment Minister Pierre Pharaon told us during a meeting on Sept. 24 that he will use all his powers to prevent the ship's visit. The minister blamed Greenpeace for raising, during the past two years, the issue of Italian toxic waste in Lebanon," Mr. Hamdan added. However, Mr. Pharaon told Reuters by telephone he had expressed reservations about Arctic Sunrise's visit but he could not take the decision to bar its entry. "I don't trust their (Greenpeace's) position towards Lebanon because they have a negative stand. Therefore I expressed my reservations on the ship's visit. I don't know how to deal with them, we agree on things and then they change their minds," Mr. Pharaon said.

Ciller asks Demirel if Islamic government worries him

ANKARA (AP) — Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said Sunday she has asked Turkey's president whether he believes the Islamic-led government has been pulling the country from its secular traditions.

Mrs. Ciller told reporters after meeting with President Süleyman Demirel that she submitted a letter to him over the issue.

"If he has any concerns that this government's practices overshadow Turkey's secular and democratic characteristics, I told him to relay them to us immediately," Mrs. Ciller said.

She said she assured Mr. Demirel that if he had any concerns, the government would look into the matter with "utmost sensitivity."

Islamic-led Welfare Party came to power in a coalition government with Mrs. Ciller's smaller centre-right party in June.

Welfare's past anti-Western and anti-NATO campaign rhetoric which also called for an Islamic union had been irritating factors for the country's secular majority. Although Welfare adopted a milder tone after coming to power, its supporters did not moderate

their objectives.

They held a demonstration calling for a strict Islamic rule in Ankara on Friday.

Additionally, Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's first foreign trip to Iran in August and his current visit to Libya caused controversy at home and abroad.

The military, which is the country's self-appointed guarantor of the secular system, also remains uneasy.

Top commanders have issued statements to reaffirm their commitment to protect the country's modern reforms.

It led to speculation that the army would not tolerate Welfare's reign much longer and step in. The military have staged coups three times since 1960. The latest one in 1980 was also partly as a result of a rise in Islamic radicalism.

But Turkey's chief of staff issued a statement on Sunday to condemn such reports in the media.

"The Turkish armed forces... will continue to stay outside domestic politics," the statement said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:20 Iris — The Happy

Professor

15:20 Captain Planet

15:45 Comedy — ALF

16:10 Road to Avonlea

17:00 News Flash

17:02 Sciences Cartoon

17:15 La Vie Devant Moi

17:30 Game Show

18:00 Les Bons Genies

18:00 Varieties — L'Intégrale

Patrick Guel

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 Magazine — Ushuaia

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Doc. — Blossom

20:00 Documentary — Man

Alive Encounter

20:45 Varieties

21:10 Star Trek — The Next

Generation

22:00 News in English

22:00 Mission Impossible

23:15 China Beach

23:59 My Two Wives

PRAYER TIMES

04:13 Fajr

05:30 Sunrise — Dhuha

11:23 Dhuhr

14:43 'Asr

17:17 Maghreb

18:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweetfield Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church

Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 652536

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Under the effect of a cold air mass expected to affect the Kingdom, temperatures will

drop becoming 4-5 degrees centigrade below average. It will be relatively cold, partly cloudy, with winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Amman 12/24

Aqaba 18/31

Deserts 10/30

Jordan Valley 19/31

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 26, Aqaba 32

Humidity readings: Amman 43 per cent, Aqaba 41 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Khalil Tinsul 757253

Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 830432

Dr. Wafiq Qaddumi 893542

Dr. Bahjat Bader 832642

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847652

IRBID: Dr. Ghazi Ta'anneh 250080

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA: Dr. Tareq Hijawi 985445

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Dept 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 644281/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al

Bureaucratic efficiency, corruption come under government scrutiny

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is seriously pursuing efforts to raise administrative efficiency, but achieving the goal is not an easy task because it needs time as well as a well-charted approach supported by strong legislation and enforcement, a cabinet minister said Monday.

Minister of Administrative Reform Kamal Nasser also said increasing the sufficiency of penalties in corruption cases was one of the key options available to the government, which has made the elimination of official corruption one of its priorities.

Mr. Nasser, addressing a weekly press briefing arranged by the Ministry of Information, called on the media to support the effort to raise bureaucratic efficiency and fight corruption. He said he was seeking the help of Jordan Television which could air citizens' experiences in dealing with bureaucrats and thus bring the message home to all concerned.

Such public exposures, he

noted, will discourage the general tendency of civil servants to take it easy on their jobs.

The minister openly referred to the serious shortcomings in services offered by civil servants as well as the typical indifference and delays that many encounter while dealing with government departments.

"Some of them openly tell the public, 'come back after a week, and if you don't like it then you can file a complaint against me,'" said Mr. Nasser. While it is a serious problem, he added, the government hands were tied simply because the rules and regulations governing the civil service do not allow serious action against the concerned official.

"We need effective legislation and strict enforcement of regulations as well as more leeway for the ministers concerned," said Mr. Nasser, adding that inquiries into misbehaviour and inefficiency of civil servants posed bureaucratic delays in themselves.

"We need change," the minister emphasised. "Change is inevitable, but it

should not be limited to one aspect but should be comprehensive and cover everything that has to do with public administration in Jordan."

"This is going to take time and needs a comprehensive approach supported by updated laws which are strictly enforced without discrimination," he added.

According to Mr. Nasser, the Kabarti government has made progress in its fight against corruption but more needs to be done. He was referring to the nearly 100 cases of corruption investigated and referred to courts by the security authorities. Dozens of other cases are under investigation.

"This government is fully committed to its pledge to fight corruption and is engaged in serious efforts to fulfil that pledge," said Mr. Nasser, referring to the policy programme presented to Parliament by the government when it took office and secured a vote of confidence from the legislature early this year.

Mr. Nasser, a veteran lawyer who served as president of the Jordan Bar

Association before joining the government, defined corruption as "use of office for personal gains" and as "overlooking rules and regulations while performing official duties."

"Corruption is not a phenomenon limited to Jordan; it is present everywhere in the Third World," said Mr. Nasser, adding that it could take various forms depending on the nature of the country and government.

"For us in Jordan, raising the cost of corruption is one key option as a deterrent," he said, noting that more often than not officials found to have accepted bribes were fined an amount equal to the bribe and a jail term.

"I propose a ten-fold increase in the fine," said Mr. Nasser. For instance, he said, if an official is found to have taken a bribe of JD 1,000, then the fine he would face in a court of law should be JD 10,000.

Mr. Nasser said he was trying, along with his colleagues in the Council of Ministers, to bring about amendments to the legislation. He did not say whether the efforts had achieved any

concrete progress.

In general, administrative reform in Jordan is three-pronged, said the minister. The first prong aims at raising the efficiency of the administrative system, particularly the civil service, the second is addressing the "human element" in terms of planning ahead in coordination with all other ministries and departments concerned, and the third is human resource development.

Addressing the "human element," the minister explained, is partly related to the government's plans to privatise state-owned entities. "It is clear that privatisation of state entities will, sooner or later, lead to elimination of extra staff" and the government is closely studying various options to address the resulting problems, he said.

Human resources development essentially means equipping the workforce to meet the demands of Jordan rather than trying to meet the employment requirements of the thousands of graduates turned out by the Kingdom's universities.

Minister returns home with fresh teacher-training ideas

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Education Munther Masri returned to Amman Monday after attending an international conference on education in Geneva and summarised the conference as directed towards attracting young people to teaching professions.

Programmes which honour prominent teachers, promote the use of modern technology in education as well as exchanges among teachers and students at national and international levels should be encouraged as delineated by recommendations, said the minister.

He said that the authorities responsible for education have been called on to enlist the help of teachers in preparing school curricula, conducting research programmes, and exchanging ideas on pedagogical methods, added Dr. Masri.

He said that the conference recommended teacher promotions, institutional training and for those invested in educational research, he urged exchanges of expertise and information at the regional level.

The minister further said that the conference issued a declaration stressing the need for involving teachers in the process of educational reform and emphasised the need for maintaining advanced teacher-training to better deal with modern educational challenges.

He said the conference called for special attention and support to be accorded to teachers working under difficult conditions and in desolate or remote areas or those facing armed conflicts and social unrest.

The minister appealed to various authorities and commercial, informational

and other sectors to back the teachers' efforts.

Dr. Masri said that the participants in the international conference held a roundtable meeting, attended by representatives of non-governmental organisations to discuss the impact of social changes and modern technology on teacher performance.

The meeting was sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and underlined the importance of teacher participation in educational reform in their respective countries.

Accompanying the minister on the week-long meeting in Geneva were two senior Ministry of Education officials responsible for teacher-training programmes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Al Azraq Health Centre opens

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Health Aref Bataineh Sunday inaugurated the Al Azraq Comprehensive Health Centre. The centre is founded on a 40 dunum plot and offers public health care, maternal care and paediatrics, dentistry and other services.

Ministry cracks down on child labour

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh Monday issued a memorandum for all ministry inspectors calling on them to fine every employer who hires people under sixteen years of age.

Minister prepares for winter season

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of the Interior Awad Khleifat Monday requested that governors form emergency teams in preparation of the coming winter season. The minister asked them to coordinate youth centres, clubs and schools and to provide sufficient equipment for any emergency cases.

Chocolate factory seized

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Supply stated that its inspectors seized a chocolate factory in Abu Alanda, south of Amman, in violation of the ministry's instructions not to use powdered milk. The factory owner will be referred to court.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Psycho" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.

CONCERT

* Performance by Al Hannunah Band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

SEMINARS AND LECTURES

* Seminar entitled "From the Muse to the Marketplace" at the University of Jordan, English Language Department at 10:00 a.m.
* Discussion on "The Literary Scene in the United States" at the Jordanian Writers Federation at 5:00 p.m.
* Lecture on "The Conditions of Water in the Middle East and Future Prospects" by Dr. Wissam Al Hashimi at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Amman Sixth International Book Exhibition" at the International Exhibition Centre, University Road, until Oct. 17.
* "Coloured Silence" exhibition by Samira Abdul Wahab at Baladus Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 687598), until Oct. 20.
* Works by Ghada Dahdaleh at the French Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.
* "The Fifth One-Dimension Exhibition" by several artists at Ab'ad Art Gallery, Mecca Street (Tel. 862105), until Oct. 10.
* Basketry exhibition (with a variety of wrought iron furniture mixed with basketry) at Jordan Design and Trade Centre, Shamsi (Tel. 699141/2), until Oct. 10.
* "Summer '96" exhibition at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (including ceramic sculptures by Vera Tamari, photographs of Jordanian villages by Ammar Khamash, works by contemporary Arab artists, a mosaic exhibition, and others), until Oct. 8.

Population awareness highlight in seminar

AMMAN (J.T.) — Delegates representing health ministries from six Arab countries, have started a three-week training seminar in Amman on modern ways of planning, executing and evaluating population information communication.

The seminar has been organised by the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Johns Hopkins University and the National Population Commission.

"Programmes in education, information, and communication which are scientifically planned and based on field work can play an important role in increasing public awareness in matters related to population problems and family health as well as in encouraging family planning so as to help improve living conditions," said Health Minister Aref Bataineh at the opening session.

A total of 26 delegates from Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Morocco are taking part in the meeting which will review computer programmes prepared by the university in population awareness and family health programmes.

Defence team files withdrawal in Bay'at Al Imam case

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The defence team, in the case of 13 men, some of them accused of sabotage, Monday withdrew from the case after the State Security Court deferred its verdict and recalled witnesses to testify.

Presiding Judge Yousef Faouri said the court decided to call two explosive experts, Captain Ali Ensour and Captain Jafar Jamil Abdul Rahim, to the witness stand.

"To ensure justice in this case, the court decided to call on these two experts to clarify some matters," Judge Faouri said.

Attorney Mazin Ershaidat, speaking on behalf of the other six appointed defence lawyers, told the court that the defence team decided to withdraw from the case as the court asked Capt. Ensour to clarify issues that had not been raised.

"We want to register our withdrawal because we feel that we cannot

defend our clients upon the court's decision," Mr. Ershaidat said.

The remaining six attorneys, appointed by the Jordan Bar Association (JBA), who registered their withdrawal include Abdul Ghafar Abu Khalaf, Issam Yassin, Faisal Batayneh, Ahmad Sheikh Salem, Mohammad Silawi, and Mohammad Hanoush.

Judge Faouri rejected their withdrawal on the grounds that the case was in its final stages. Captain Ali Ensour was called to testify on the effect of mixing three substances (oxygen water, acetone and lemon salt) and to confirm or deny that these substances can form explosive material.

The prosecution has charged that these substances were found at the third defendant Mustafa Hassan Musa's home.

Moreover, the court also asked the prosecution of the whereabouts of two hand-grenades which the prosecution had mentioned in its

charge sheet but never introduced in court.

"The court viewed only, to four, hand-grenades while the charge sheet stated six," Judge Faouri said.

The military prosecutor explained that the missing hand-grenades were destroyed by an explosive expert.

The defence protested the addition of the explanation to the case because the prosecution had already presented its evidence and closing arguments.

The court rejected their plea and decided to accept the statement.

Attorney Ershaidat told the Jordan Times, following the conclusion of the three-hour court session, that the attorneys were insisting on their decision to withdraw from the case.

"We are going to register an official withdrawal at the union," he said.

He said that the court "cannot accommodate the prosecution's mistakes, it should maintain a balanced position."

The defendants, known by their affilia-

tion name as Bay'at Al Imam, are charged with slander against His Majesty King Hussein, illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials. If convicted, some of the group's 13 members might face the death penalty.

Some of the group's members had repeatedly rejected the appointment of attorneys to defend them in the past, charging that they did not believe in the court's justice system.

But in January, the group accepted the court ruling to appoint seven attorneys for their defense in the case.

According to the charge sheet, the group followers believe themselves to be the only "true followers" of the Islamic faith and do not attend mosque prayers. The group was apprehended before it could carry out any attacks.

Presiding Judge Yousef Faouri postponed the case until Oct. 20 to hear the two explosive experts.

Art and culture get a boost at Yarmouk University

IRBID (Petra) — A three-day conference regarding contemporary Arab art Monday opened at Yarmouk University in Irbid with the participation of thirty teachers and specialists from seven Arab countries.

Deputising for Her Majesty Queen Noor, HRH Princess Rajwah Bint Ali, attended the opening ceremony which was attended by Yarmouk University President Marwan Kamal and a number of participants who outlined the importance of increasing art appreciation among the Arab public.

Dr. Kamal voiced his hope that such a meeting could contribute to national endeavours in enriching the cultural heritage of the Arab World.

The meeting also serves as a forum for highlighting the Arab art research boosting art movements



Deputising for Her Majesty Queen Noor, HRH Princess Rajwah Bint Ali Monday inspected one of the showpieces in a contemporary Arab art seminar at Yarmouk University (Petra photo)

in the Arab world, he said. Dean of the Faculty of Culture and Arts Shadia Tell expressed optimism that the gathering would become an annual event attended by increasing numbers of artist groups.

She said that the meeting is being attended by artists from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq, and Jordan who will discuss a range of contemporary art topics as well as the importance of artistic and cultural education and the history of Arab arts.

After the opening ceremony, Princess Rajwah inaugurated an exhibition at the university organised by a number of artists displaying paintings depicting natural scenery and the general environment of the Arab World.

Clinton, Dole clash in 1st debate

Polls show Clinton came out on top

HARTFORD, Conn. (R) — President Bill Clinton and Republican challenger Bob Dole clashed Sunday in a debate that seemed unlikely to derail Mr. Clinton's drive for a second four-year term in the White House.

Sen. Dole attacked Mr. Clinton for having a weak foreign policy, raising taxes at home and failing to stop rising drug abuse, while the president defended his record, telling Americans they were better off than four years ago.

Opinion polls conducted immediately after the 90-minute debate showed that Mr. Clinton came out on top, though the public found Sen. Dole had performed better than expected.

Sen. Dole entered the debate facing the formidable task of denting Mr. Clinton's armour while promoting himself as a credible alternative. Mr. Clinton's job was simpler: Protect his wide lead in the public opinion polls while avoiding gaffes.

"There was nothing very big here. It was closer to a

draw than anything else, and a draw helps Clinton," said David Birdsell, an expert on presidential debates with Baruch College in New York.

Sen. Dole did produce many of the better lines and showed a quick wit, but Mr. Clinton stuck doggedly to his message that he was the better man to lead America into the 21st century.

Sen. Dole responded: "I want a bridge to the future but I also want a bridge to the truth. We have to tell the truth. And the truth is, there's a lot wrong in America. We need a strong economic package. We need a tax cut. We need a \$5,000 child credit. We'll have that soon."

Standing side by side, the 73-year-old Dole, tanned but tense, contrasted with the clearly younger and perpetually smiling Clinton.

Both campaigns sent scores of aides to brief the press, each side arguing that their man was the victor. But snap polls by three TV networks all declared Mr. Clinton the winner.

An ABC poll showed that both candidates appeared to benefit modestly from their showing in the debate, with Mr. Clinton's support rising to 55 per cent from 51 per cent and Sen. Dole's backing inching to 41 per cent from 40 per cent.

Support for Reform Party candidate Ross Perot, who was excluded from the debate, dipped to two per cent from five per cent in the ABC poll.

The debate was the first of two the candidates will hold. The second is scheduled to be held in San Diego on Oct. 16.

With neither Mr. Clinton nor Sen. Dole inflicting real damage in the first debate, the pressure is now on Sen. Dole to come up big in the second encounter if he is to narrow Mr. Clinton's lead.

Mr. Clinton quickly set the tone of the debate in his opening statement. "Four years ago you took me on faith. Now there's a record... We are better off than we were four years ago. Let's keep it going," he declared.

Sen. Dole, who looked nervous and rarely smiled, quickly shot back: "Well, he's better off than he was four years ago," getting a laugh from the audience.

"Well, I guess some may be better off," he added. "(Iraqi leader) Saddam Hussein is probably better off."

The Republican candidate argued that Mr. Clinton's recent bombing in Iraq had failed to deter the Iraqi leader from establishing control over the north of his country, while demonstrating his failure to keep an international coalition together. He also attacked Mr. Clinton's record on Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Korea, Cuba, Ireland and the Middle East.

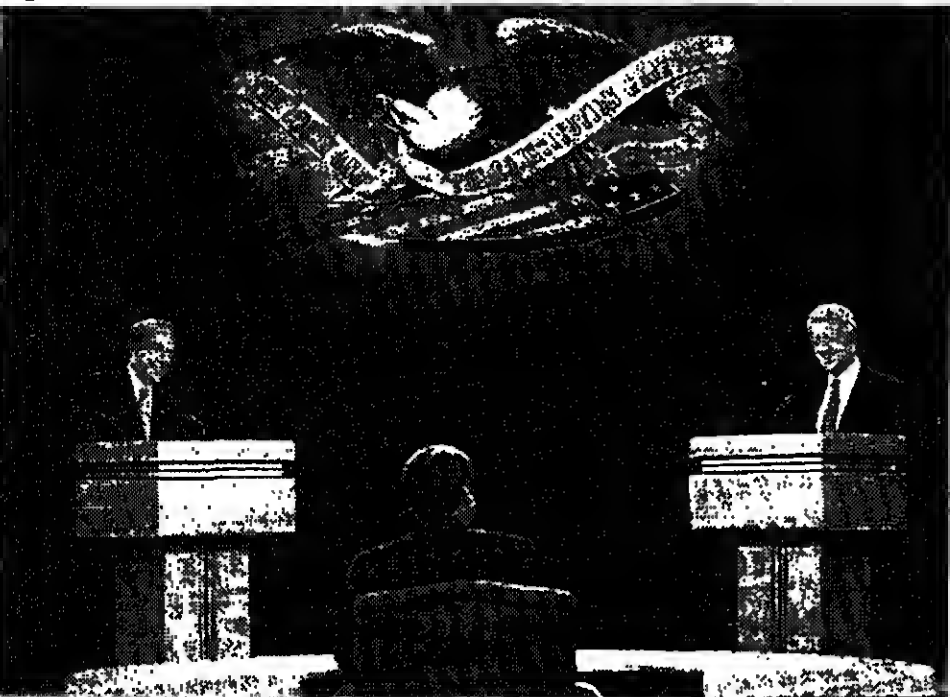
Moderator Jim Lehrer kept the candidates moving quickly through a broad array of subjects, from foreign policy to health, education, drugs, taxes and personal integrity.

One of the sharpest exchanges came when Mr. Clinton accused Sen. Dole of opposing his efforts to rein in tobacco companies.

"It wasn't me who opposed what we tried to do to save the lives of children who were subject to tobacco and then went to the tobacco growers and bragged about standing up to the government when we tried to stop the advertising, marketing and sales of tobacco to children," Mr. Clinton said.

Sen. Dole responded by touting his own anti-smoking record dating back to 1965. "It wasn't until election year, Mr. President, that you thought about stopping smoking. What about drugs that doubled in the last 44 months? Cocaine up 41 per cent, marijuana, cocaine up 166 per cent. It seems to me that you have a selective memory," Sen. Dole said.

Later, invited to comment about Mr. Clinton's personal integrity, Sen. Dole resisted the temptation, saying: "The question is, would you buy a used election promise from my opponent?"



Republican Presidential candidate Bob Dole (left) and President Bill Clinton (right) face moderator Jim Lehrer at their first presidential debate in Hartford, Connecticut, Sunday. Standing a few feet apart behind lecterns, the two candidates hammered at each other in a 90-minute encounter. Sen. Dole attacked Mr. Clinton on foreign policy, drugs, the economy and his own credibility (Reuters photo)

France's Juppe steps up security after blast

PARIS (R) — France stepped up protection of public buildings Monday after a powerful bomb hit Prime Minister Alain Juppe's Bordeaux Mayoral office, raising fears of a mainland offensive by Corsican separatists.

Mr. Juppe held emergency talks with his interior and justice ministers about the Saturday night bombing. His office said he ordered them to reinforce security at sensitive sites in Paris and several major cities.

The attack badly damaged the elegant 18th-century city hall in the southwestern city only hours after Mr. Juppe had left it. He returned later from Paris to survey the damage, voicing shock.

The building was empty at the time and the one-kilo bomb, planted right outside Mr. Juppe's office, caused no injuries.

No one immediately claimed responsibility, but investigators said the plastic explosive used pointed to Corsican separatists who have vilified Mr. Juppe and threatened to take their bombing campaign from the Mediterranean island to mainland France.

Basque separatists, who have been active in the southwest, and Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas blamed for a wave of bloody bomb attacks last year used gas container bombs.

A nationwide security operation, known as "Vigipirate", has been in force since last year's Algeria-linked bombing campaign, but the interior ministry reduced the level of alert in January.

The "historic wing" of the outlawed Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC) last week claimed responsibility for a bomb attack out-

side the law courts in Aix-en-Provence in southern France, its first on the mainland in several years.

Mr. Juppe's office said he asked Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debré and Justice Minister Jacques Toubon to do the utmost to speed up the investigation and bring the culprits to justice.

The probe was entrusted to the Paris anti-terrorist prosecutor. The prefect (government representative) in Bordeaux requested police reinforcements to guard the City Hall.

After politicians accused Paris of being soft on the Corsican separatists' two-decade-old bombing campaign for greater autonomy, Mr. Juppe toured the Mediterranean island last July and ordered a crackdown on the guerrillas.

Several suspects have since been detained, angering separatists who accused Juppe of reneging on promises made in secret peace talks.

While declining to blame Corsican guerrillas for the attack, Mr. Juppe said in a television interview Sunday night he would stick to his policy of firmness towards the separatists.

"This policy is difficult to carry out because we are facing terrorists... the state cannot yield and must not be intimidated. We will remain fully determined regarding Corsica," he said.

Separatists have raised the stakes in recent weeks, targeting homes and offices belonging to Mr. Juppe.

They have threatened to end an eight-month truce which has in fact been punctuated by more than 80 bomb attacks on the holiday island in the past two months.

The truce is due to expire formally next Saturday.

Russia nuclear disarmament is not assured — Gorbachev

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Sunday that if countries played "new geopolitical games," efforts to reduce nuclear arms in Russia could suffer.

Stressing that he wanted to see post-cold war arms reduction continue, Mr. Gorbachev said during a debate in San Francisco that the International Community was failing to take advantage of tremendous opportunities.

"The disappearance of the Soviet Union from the geopolitical arena has created a new situation, and I am afraid that some are trying to play new geopolitical games," Mr. Gorbachev said, in an apparent allusion to the United States.

"If that happens, then the process of nuclear disarmament in Russia will be very difficult, including ratification of Start II," he said, referring to the pending Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

"If we hear from the United States that military budgets here could grow, if ballistic missile defences will be created here in this country, if NATO expands to the East, then in Russia people are beginning to think: 'What's happening? Is it a return to the past?'" he said.

Mr. Gorbachev spoke during a debate on nuclear disarmament and other issues that closed the "State of the world forum," a five-day conference on international issues organised by the Mr. Gorbachev foundation USA.

The debate, in which Haitian former President Jean Bertrand Aristide, Israeli former Foreign Minister Abba Eban and several other current and former officials took part, was broadcast live outside the United States by BBC world television.

Gloria Duffy, a former deputy assistant defence secretary in Washington, said there was no question that terrorists and rogue states were trying to obtain nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological arms.

She said the United States removed enough nuclear material from Kazakhstan for 20 nuclear weapons.

"But Iran had been there before us, looking around, as they are in many areas, to obtain the material for nuclear weapons. This is a true danger. There is enough nuclear material in the former Soviet Union for the equivalent of 100,000 Hiroshima and Nagasaki-sized bombs," Ms. Duffy said.

"We can abolish nuclear weapons, but we can't abolish their components and the material in them that can be used to make new nuclear weapons," she said. The United States and Russia, as well as the rest of the International Community, should cooperate in combating the problem, she added.

Richard Butler, Australia's permanent representative to the United Nations, said the United States and Russia had made quite good progress in recent years in reducing nuclear weapons and must continue. "If they do not continue, we will face a terrible price in the major developing countries," he said.

Eban said the recently signed international treaty against nuclear testing should be implemented and its scope broadened to include other countries.

Mr. Aristide said leaders negotiating disarmament agreements should think about the "millions and millions of people asking for peace, dying for peace," and "move ahead building a new world of peace."



Russian security supremo Alexander Lebed (left) talks with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana during a meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels Monday. Gen. Lebed has said he will use his visit to NATO to present new proposals to solve a dispute over plans for eastward expansion (Reuters photo)

Lebed hints at tough talking with NATO

BRUSSELS (R) — Russian Security Chief Alexander Lebed Monday entered what for two decades of his army career was the enemy "lion's den", promising proposals to defuse a dispute between NATO and Russia over alliance expansion plans.

The outspoken former paratroop commander, a strong contender for his country's presidency should incumbent Boris Yeltsin fail to return to his duties after planned heart surgery later this year, smiled and shrugged his shoulders at a barrage of media questions as he entered the front door of NATO headquarters.

Sporting a crisp, black civilian suit but his military bearing intact, Lebed was welcomed by NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana who is expected to raise proposals to station Russian officers at NATO supreme headquarters to help build confidence.

The Brussels headquarters, a rambling fenced complex of low brick buildings, was the object of scorn in cold war Soviet media, described variously as a "nest of vipers" and "lion's den." Mr. Lebed says that, while he has disavowed Communism, it is NATO that has failed to adapt to the post-cold war era.

Mr. Lebed is paying his first visit to the West, where he remains an unknown quantity, familiar largely

through his booming parade-ground voice. For many officials here and in NATO capitals he has the same "Maverick" aura as Boris Yeltsin had in the years before he edged Mikhail Gorbachev from the Kremlin.

His comments, rich in imagery, are colourful as they are sometimes contradictory.

These days Mr. Yeltsin, currently preparing for heart surgery at a sanatorium outside Moscow, is seen as guardian of continuity.

The uncertainty surrounds Mr. Lebed, the former 14th army chief.

Mr. Lebed has been vehement in his opposition to alliance plans to incorporate some of Moscow's erstwhile Warsaw pact allies, saying this would be a return to the cold war spirit. But how much of this is for popular consumption at home is unclear.

The Russian foreign ministry, by contrast, has appeared more conciliatory in recent months. NATO must "decide whom to believe."

Mr. Lebed hinted Sunday he would have some blunt words for the alliance, which he once described as behaving like a drunken hooligan over the enlargement plan.

But he gave no details of the proposals for a solution he said he would put to Mr. Solana.

In an article published in the Paris-based international Herald Tribune newspaper Monday, Mr. Solana proposed that Russia and NATO station permanent liaison officers in their respective military commands to help build a closer relationship.

Mr. Solana said the two sides must build on cooperation in the current peace mission in Bosnia. "Why not build on this by having Russian officers permanently at NATO Supreme Command Headquarters and, reciprocally, NATO liaison officers at the Russian general staff?" he asked.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry proposed last month that the alliance "throw open its doors" to Russia to help convince Moscow its intentions were not hostile.

Mr. Lebed has said on many occasions he would like to take Russia's fate into his own hands as president. Among his priorities would be increased funding for the forces which he said recently are on the verge of mutiny because spending cuts.

As well as Mr. Solana, Mr. Lebed will meet NATO ambassadors Monday. On Tuesday he is scheduled to visit NATO's military command headquarters in the town of Mons, which is the centre of operations for alliance forces in Bosnia.

Yeltsin transferred to sanatorium

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin was transferred Monday from Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital to a sanatorium in a Moscow suburb, the presidential press service said.

The Russian president, due to undergo heart bypass surgery by mid-December, was transferred to a sanatorium at Barvikha, west of Moscow, to prepare further for the operation, a Kremlin spokesman said.

Mr. Yeltsin could remain at Barvikha until the operation, the exact date of which has not been specified, the spokesman told AFP.

Sergei Mironov, head of the Kremlin Medical Centre, told Interfax News Agency that Mr. Yeltsin was in a "totally satisfactory" condition and that the preparation for the bypass surgery was proceeding as planned.

Mr. Mironov said the president would undergo slightly more rigorous physical exercise at Barvikha. He could also increase his workload, Interfax reported.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, has been hospitalised since Sept. 12 and his workload has been drastically reduced as a chronic heart problem takes its toll. Last week Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrebinsky said Mr. Yeltsin was working for two to three hours a day in the Central Clinical Hospital.

The Russian president, absent from the public eye for much of the past 15 months, has suffered three heart attacks since July 1995, the latest of which occurred between the two rounds of presidential elections in June and July which returned him to the Kremlin.

A team of Kremlin surgeons said late last month they would carry out bypass surgery on Yeltsin, but speculation has persisted that the president's weak heart and generally poor condition could render the operation not only dangerous but ineffective.

Top cardiologists have said he will need at least six weeks to recover from the operation, prompting leading Communist opposition figures to demand that Mr. Yeltsin step down and call fresh elections.

But the president hit back last week in radio and television addresses, insisting he was active and still firmly in charge, although television footage showed him looking haggard.

Despite the risks involved with the operation on Mr. Yeltsin, the Russian president has insisted he undergo surgery rather than soldier on in his present state of incapacitation.

Queen Elizabeth to 'buy off Fergie'

LONDON (R) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth has drawn up a deal to settle the debts of the Duchess of York and make her give up custody of her daughters, the Sun newspaper said Monday.

The £5-million (\$7.5 million) pay-off would clear the 36-year-old duchess's overdraft and pay for her to set up home in exile abroad, the top-selling tabloid daily said.

In return the former Sarah Ferguson, better known as Fergie, would have to give her ex-husband Prince Andrew, the queen's second son, custody of their children, the Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie.

The newspaper, which is usually well informed on royal matters, added: "She would also be stripped of her title and have to abandon plans to tell all in her book and high profile interviews."

Fergie, who received a £2-million divorce settlement, has been a cause of grave concern to the royal family, which has been embarrassed by the lurid accounts of her private life that have emerged recently.

Vasso Kottis, a London-based Greek

mystic whom Fergie consulted, has published graphic details of the duchess's relations with a number of men.

Fergie last week withdrew from a court bid to block publication of a book by Allan Starkie, an associate of American financier John Bryan. Mr. Bryan was pictured sucking the duchess's toes by a swimming pool in the south of France.

The duchess found herself under further pressure after the Mail On Sunday newspaper said Princess Margaret, the queen's sister, had sent Fergie a bitter letter last year accusing her of shaming the royal family.

"You have done more to bring shame on the family than ever could have been imagined," the paper quoted Princess Margaret as writing to Fergie after the duchess had sent her flowers.

"How dare you discredit us like this and how dare you send me those flowers."

Prince Andrew visited the duchess at her home near London Sunday. He was said to have spelled out the royal family's concerns.

U.K. 'house of horrors' goes under wrecking ball

GLOUCESTER, England (AFP) — One of Britain's most infamous addresses, the "house of horrors" that was home to serial killers Fred and Rosemary West went under the wrecking ball here Monday. A crowd of TV crews, journalists and curiosity-seekers assembled in front of the three-story semi-detached Edwardian house at 25 Cromwell Street in this city in central England as a dozen demolition workers piled out of two vans. The work was to be done over two weeks, under police guard, hardly a run-of-the-mill wrecking operation. The Gloucester City Council, which bought the house, and the one next door, after Rosemary West was convicted of the murder of 10 young women last November and sentenced to 10 life prison terms, has ordered it totally obliterated. Every brick, every chunk of mortar and concrete, will be pulverised to dust, every piece of wood smashed and burned to ash, in order to thwart ghoulish souvenir hunters. Preparations for the demolition were a vivid reminder of the early days of the murder investigation, when police probed the house top to bottom with sensitive sounding equipment, then methodically tore apart the garden, basement, walls and floors in search of human remains. In all, the house yielded the remains of nine young women, bearing the gruesome marks of ritual torture, sexual abuse, and death said by forensic experts to have been agonisingly long in coming.

Car theft foiled by corpse

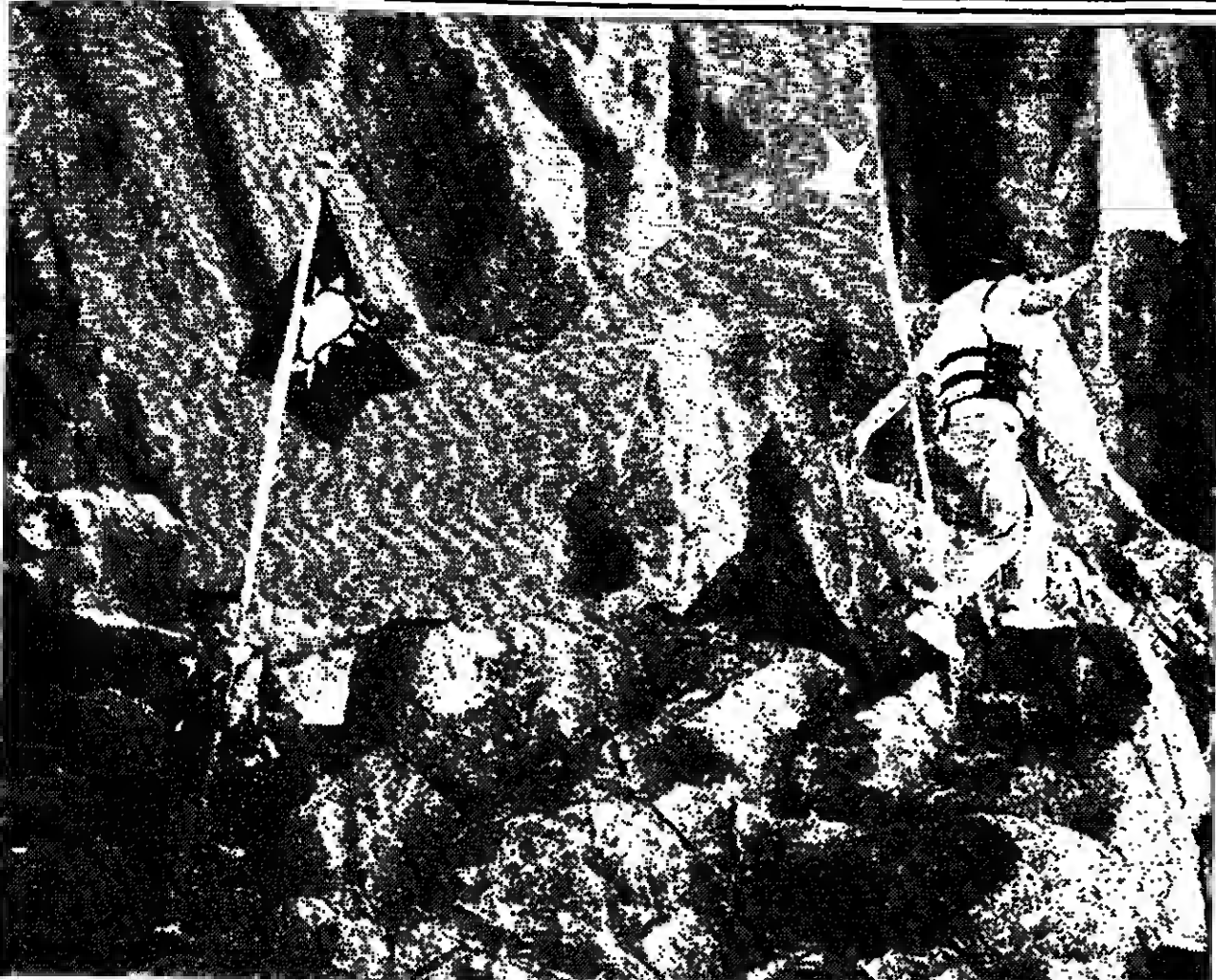
BRISBANE (R) — Two Australian men who stole a car were compelled to own up to their crime after finding a dead body on the back seat, police said Monday. The two stole the car in the north Queensland city of Cairns Saturday but dumped it outside town after discovering they had got more than they bargained for. They contacted the police Sunday and guided them to the site, where they recovered the partly-decomposed body of a man. Cairns Police said Monday. The two men were charged with car theft but were not suspected of being involved in the man's death, which police said may have been caused by a drug overdose. "They got a shock all right," a police spokesman said.

U.S. school's sex harassment code to be revised

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (R) — The superintendent of schools in the city where a 6-year-old boy was disciplined for kissing a girl on the cheek said Friday a sexual harassment code would be revised to take age into account. In a two-page statement, Lexington (North Carolina) City Schools Superintendent James Simeon said, "although we have just one student-to-student sexual harassment policy for students of all ages, this incident has caused us to focus upon the issue of age appropriateness." He said details of the new policy would be presented at the next meeting of the school board, scheduled for Monday. Most of Mr. Simeon's statement concentrated on denying that first-grader Jonathan Prevette had been accused of violating the sexual harassment policy or suspended from school for kissing a classmate last month. Confusion may have arisen when the principal of Southeast Elementary School met with the boy's mother and told her that if his unwelcome behaviour continued, "it had the potential of becoming a problem under the district's sexual harassment policy." Mr. Simeon said. The 6-year-old's punishment was not suspension but placement in a "high management" class for a day, he stressed.

U.K. 'house of horrors' goes wrecking ball

GLOUCESTER, England (AP) — One of the most infamous addresses in the history of the city was home to a serial killer, and now it is being demolished. The house, known as the "House of Horrors," was the home of Fred and Rosemary West, who were convicted of the murders of five young women in the 1970s. The house, located in Cromwell Street, is being demolished by a team of workers. The demolition is expected to take about two weeks. The house was built in 1850 and was a three-story semi-detached house. It was built by a local builder, and the Wests moved in in 1967. The house was a popular meeting place for the Wests and their friends, and it was here that the murders took place. The house was a symbol of the Wests' reign of terror, and its demolition is a significant event for the city.



The rival flags of Taiwan's exiled Republic of China government (left) and China's Communist government fly adjacent each other on the disputed East China Sea islands Monday after activists from Taiwan and Hong Kong successfully negotiated past Japanese guards to land on the island as a symbolic challenge to Japanese sovereignty there (Reuters photo)

Seoul says alleged spy held in N. Korea was a missionary

SEOUL (R) — South Korea said Monday a U.S. citizen held in North Korea on spy charges was a China-based missionary in his mid-20s, and denied he was working for Seoul.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said he believed Evan Carl Hunzike was working as a missionary in an area of northeast China bordering North Korea.

He said Pyongyang may have fabricated the charge to force Washington into direct diplomatic talks.

"My understanding is that he was in China as a missionary," he said, adding that Mr. Hunzike had South Korean ancestry on his mother's side but both parents were U.S. citizens.

Pyongyang said Sunday that Mr. Hunzike was arrested on Aug. 24 after crossing near the gulf of the Amnok River, called the Yalu in Chinese, and had been charged with spying for the South. The charges carry a possible death penalty.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman denied Mr. Hunzike was a South Korean agent and the U.S. State Department said the man was not connected with the U.S. government.

A White House spokesman said Washington had asked the Swedish charge d'affaires in Pyongyang, which represents U.S. interests in North Korea, to help gather information on the spy charges.

Seoul's Foreign Ministry said Pyongyang's aim in raising the spy scandal was to try to engage Washington in talks and divert attention from an ill-fated submarine incursion into South Korean waters last month.

"Direct diplomatic contact with the United States is what the North is aiming for by charging Mr. Hunzike with espionage," the spokesman said.

North Korea often seeks ways to drive a wedge between the United States and South Korea in direct negotiations.

Pyongyang's spy charge comes at a time when tensions on the Korean peninsula have come close to the breaking point after a manhunt for 26 North Korean soldiers whose submarine landed in the South last month.

Twenty-two of the crew were killed by South Korean troops or found dead, while one was captured. Seoul has wound down the hunt for the remaining three.

North Korea has threatened "merciless retaliation" for the deaths, vowing "blood should be paid for blood."

South Korean President Kim Young-Sam, backed by opposition leaders, Monday demanded Pyongyang immediately stop threatening reprisals for the deaths.

A presidential spokesman said that at a crisis meeting, Mr. Kim and the opposition politicians "warned North Korea that any provocations would receive stern punishment."

An opposition party leader later quoted Mr. Kim as saying at the meeting that South Korea had repeatedly sent messages to the North warning Pyongyang that its provocations would lead to its extermination and an all-out war.

In response to the North Korean threats, Seoul has stepped up security at airports, ports and diplomatic missions, assigned more bodyguards to key public figures and tightened vigilance on five west coast islands seen vulnerable to a Northern attack.

Pyongyang Monday again accused Seoul of provoking conflict on the tense Korean peninsula, where a fragile ceasefire has kept the peace since the 1950-53 Korean War.

"Their frantic arms buildup, confrontation and adventurous war gambles against the North may lead to a war provocation against the North any time in league with outsiders," the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

Meanwhile, a diplomat at the North Korean embassy in Moscow told Russia's RIA news agency Monday North Korea has no intention of invading South Korean islands or other territory.

Officials at the embassy were not available to confirm the report, which added that North Korea's stated determination to retaliate for the deaths of more than 20 of its soldiers who ran aground in the south aboard a submarine "in no way means a threat of invasion."

Pyongyang has threatened "merciless retaliation" for the incident last month.

RIA, quoting the North Korean diplomat, said: "North Korea has no intention of invading South Korean islands, and Seoul's assertions on this are completely unfounded."

Defection is new blow to U.K. Conservatives

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Conservatives, already mired in scandal over allegations of parliamentary corruption, suffered a new blow Monday when a senior member quit to join tycoon Sir James Goldsmith's new Referendum Party.

Lord McAlpine, a former Conservative treasurer and deputy chairman, embarrassingly announced his defection on the eve of the party's last annual conference before general elections, which must be held by May 1997.

Prime Minister John Major had earlier sought to contain a damaging row over charges that members of his party accepted money in return for asking questions in parliament.

But Lord McAlpine's announcement presented Mr. Major with a crisis on a second front, reopening deep Conservative splits over Europe.

Sir James had already shaken the Conservative Party to its core with his demand for a referendum over Britain's future in the European Union.

Lord McAlpine told the BBC that he was not afraid of being branded a traitor. "People talk in terms of traitors and they blame people for changing their minds. I mean, for God's sake, it's a mobile thing, politics," he said.

"I don't need any converting to the point of view of the Referendum Party. I need converting back to the Conservative Party because they don't seem to be very conservative."

Conservative Party Chairman Brian Mawhinney sought to play down the defection. "He has distanced himself from the Conservative Party for some time now. I hope that he can still be persuaded of the sense of what we're doing," he said.

Sir James, who welcomed Lord McAlpine into his party, has threatened to field candidates at the general election against all Conservative members of parliament who do not back his party's aims.

Opinion polls suggest such candidates will win few votes but, with the opposition Labour Party now leading by at least 20 percentage points, they could make the difference between defeat or victory for several sitting Conservative members.

Lord McAlpine said: "If the Referendum Party was standing, I think I would have to break a habit of a lifetime and probably vote for them."

Chinese flags fly briefly over Japan-held islands

ABOARD THE HANG-HAI CHIA (R) — Taiwan and Hong Kong activists pierced a Japanese maritime cordon Monday, clambered ashore and planted Chinese flags on an East China Sea archipelago, boldly challenging Japan's claim of sovereignty.

Frogmen scrambled through rough surf in a dawn landing on one of the uninhabited isles to hoist the red five-star of the Communist People's Republic of China and the rival blue-and-red flag of Taiwan's exiled Republic of China.

Some 300 protesters aboard a 50-boat flotilla vying to claim the chain back for one rival China or the other let up a great roar of approval as the flags whipped against a blue sky.

The rare, two-China symbolism was fleeting, however, as blustery winds soon sent the rival flags tumbling into the water. A separate landing on another shore was similarly brief.

The latest protest was unmarred by tragedy, unlike an encounter last month when a protest leader from Hong Kong drowned.

China and nationalist-ruled Taiwan have been rivals since a civil war split them in 1949 and are out on speaking terms, but have found their interests awkwardly conjoined as pressure among Chinese for a joint response to Japan has swelled.

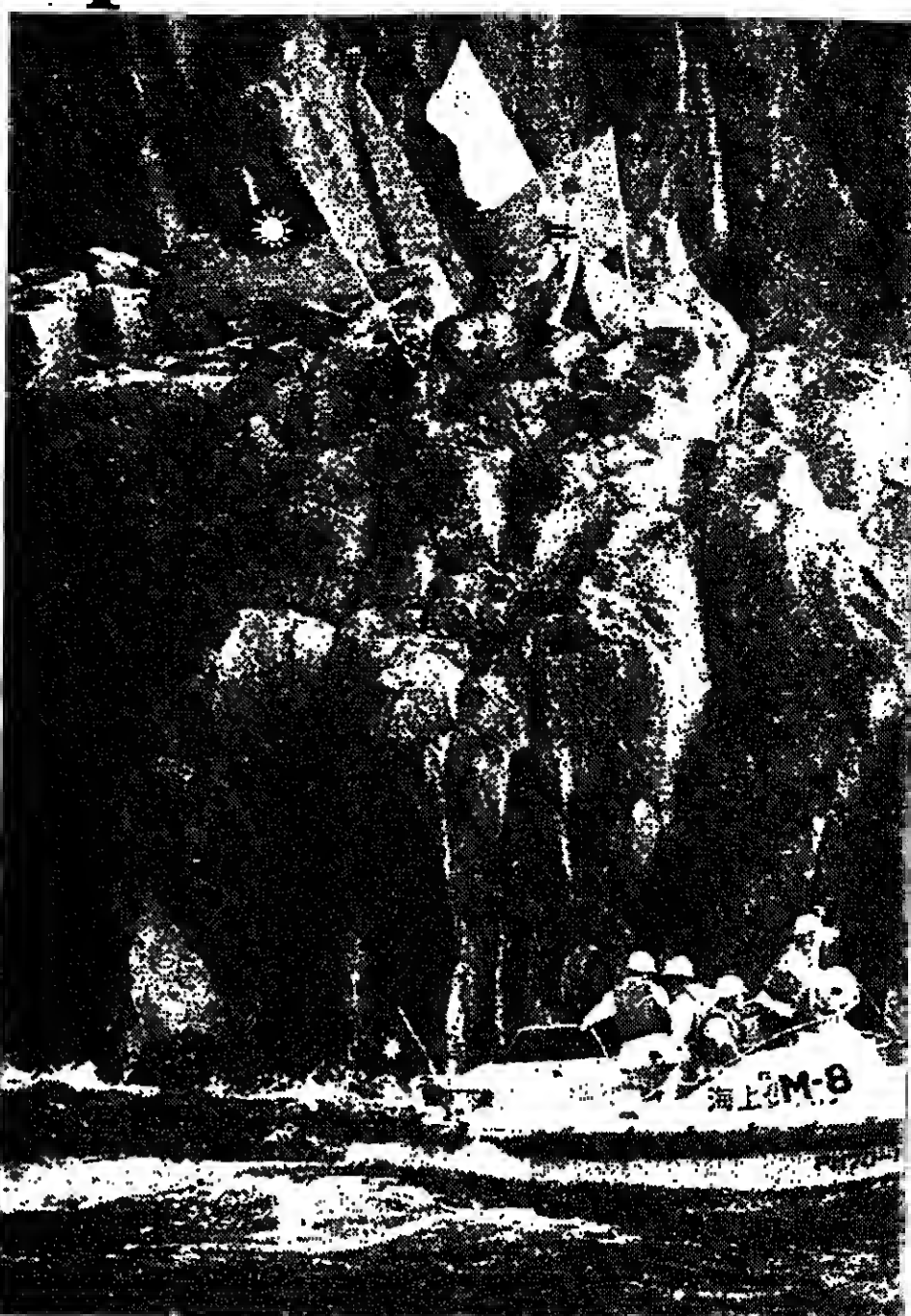
Protest leaders quickly withdrew their forces and left the islands, claimed by Japan since 1895 as the Senkakus and by China and Taiwan as the Diaoyus. But they pledged to return.

"We will continue our effort to protect the Diaoyus and to retake the Diaoyus," Taiwan protest organizer Chin Chieh-Siou told state radio. "We will not quit until we succeed."

Said another joyous activist: "We've finally spoken the will of the Chinese people."

Still, mission leaders failed to remove a light-house erected by Japanese rightists in July, a move to assert Tokyo's claim that sparked anti-Japanese and increasingly nationalist protests among Chinese in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau and China.

Japan lamented what it called the illegal landing and would not rule out arresting future landing parties, saying its fleet of 60



Taiwanese and Hong Kong activists plant rival flags from Taiwan's Republic of China government and China's Communist government adjacent each other on one of the disputed East China Sea islands, while Japanese sea patrols look on. About 50 protest boats sailed from Taiwan carrying some 300 activists challenging Japan's sovereignty claims to the Diaoyus or Senkakus in Japan. Taiwan and China also claim the islands (Reuters photo)

maritime safety boats had "acted prudently."

"If protesters do act (again), disobeying our warnings, we will take proper measures," government spokesman Teijiro Furukawa said in Tokyo.

Taiwan, which had hinted it might block the sailing, hailed what it called a brave, rational and peaceful protest.

"We always admire and recognize acts of patriotism to protect our land," said government spokesman Su Chi.

Japanese patrols jockeyed into the paths of landing craft but were unable to

thwart waves of small boats whose crews had spent a week practicing landings.

At least two demonstrators who fell overboard during the excitement were rescued.

The captain of one of several protest boats involved in collisions said a Japanese patrol deliberately hunted his stern, causing minor damage. Japan denied any intentional ramming.

Videotape shot from a Japanese helicopter showed numerous collisions between Japanese forces and protest boats in chaotic confrontations just metres from the rocks.

One protest boat was crippled badly enough in a collision that 13 of its 15 passengers had to be moved to safety on other craft. It was returning to Taiwan under its own steam.

Until Monday, Japan's coastal patrols had managed to repulse all earlier landing attempts — one of which ended in tragedy on Sept. 26 when Hong Kong protest leader David Chan, whose boat also had been turned away, leapt into a rolling sea to defy Japanese sovereignty. He drowned.

Taiwan maritime police vessels in the vicinity Monday but did not interfere.

Yeltsin sets tougher policy for Chechenya talks

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin toughened Russia's stance at talks with separatist Chechen rebels and a government official warned third countries against any attempts to interfere in the negotiations.

Sergei Stepashin, head of the government's administrative department, told NTV television Sunday that Mr. Yeltsin, in his latest guidelines for peace talks with Chechen rebels, ruled out the possibility of granting full independence to Chechenya.

"Russia's territorial integrity cannot be a subject of trade," he quoted Mr. Yeltsin's instructions to the Russian negotiating team as saying.

Russian security chief Alexander Lebed signed a peace accord with rebel Chief-of-Staff Aslan Maskhadov on Aug. 31 to halt 21 months of war.

Under the deal Russian troops, which had failed to establish control over most of Chechenya, started withdrawing from the region.

The rebels agreed to put off for five years a decision on whether Chechenya would become independent.

Tens of thousands of people, mainly civilians, had been killed since Russia sent in troops in December 1994 to try to crush the southern region's drive for independence.

Gen. Lebed has said he is certain that the deal improves chances of keeping Chechenya as part of Russia and Mr. Yeltsin, who is preparing for heart surgery, said the former paratroop general had carried out his

instructions to end the war promptly.

Gen. Lebed said five years of peace and realities of life in landlocked Chechenya would make the separatists more willing to reduce their demand for independence in favour of strong autonomy.

But Commander Maskhadov, indicating that the rebels have their own vision for the future, said in a television interview shown Sunday that Chechenya would never agree to be part of Russia.

"No Chechen has ever signed any kind of document saying that Chechenya is a part of Russia and there will never be such a Chechen," he told Russian public television, though he added that the region could maintain close ties with Russia.

An unnamed senior government official, quoted by Interfax News Agency, said Commander Maskhadov's statement had "seriously complicated the process of peaceful settlement of the conflict."

Mr. Stepashin said Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov had told other countries including the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania where support for the separatists is strong, to stay out of the dispute.

"Primakov told several ambassadors in Moscow that if their countries hold separate talks or recognize Chechenya's independence, Russia can raise a question of severing diplomatic links with these countries," he said.

Italian police fire on colleagues; suspect killed

ROME (R) — Police in Italy shot at colleagues by mistake, killing an arrested mafia suspect in a gunfight that has prompted angry calls for better coordination.

Domenico Morabito, the son of a wanted crime boss, died of his wounds late Saturday shortly after he was arrested by plainclothes Carabinieri paramilitary police in the small Calabrian mountain town of Africo on the toe of southern Italy.

Authorities Monday said the officers had fired in the air to stop bystanders from intervening when they snatched Mr. Morabito, 39, from a street and huddled him into an unmarked car.

Civilian police nearby, alerted by the shots, spotted the speeding vehicle and opened fire when its driver ignored orders to stop, killing Morabito and slightly wounding a Carabinieri.

Both forces described the incident as a "tragic mistake."

All the officers involved were in plainclothes. Newspapers Monday said both groups may have believed the other was from the 'ndrangheta, the Calabrian equivalent of the Sicilian mafia.

Police unions called the shooting a scandal. "We can no longer tolerate police and Carabinieri shooting at each other without knowing who they are," said Roberto Sgalla, leader

of the Siulp Police Union. "It is unthinkable that Carabinieri and police, especially when they're in plainclothes, work in the same places without knowing about it," he said.

The Carabinieri come under the jurisdiction of the defence ministry while civilian police answer to the interior ministry. Italy also has a finance police force as well as municipal police in each town.

Car theft foiled corpse

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The Foreign Ministry spokesman denied Mr. Hunzike was a South Korean agent and the U.S. State Department said the man was not connected with the U.S. government.

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Half way to democracy

IT WAS a positive step for democracy when Kuwaitis went to the polls yesterday to elect a new parliament, especially that the elections took place despite the scars that the Iraqi occupation left on their country. Except for a brief period of time Kuwait has pressed ahead with a democratisation process in a region that is still some distance away from democracy. There was a time when this process was the envy of most other Arab states.

It is because of the high expectations for a liberalised political life in Kuwait that all democratic countries must feel deeply disappointed at the fact that Kuwait enjoys only an all-male elections with Kuwaiti women, many of whom are professionals and highly sophisticated, denied participation. This strikes us as absurd and contrary to not only international norms and basic human rights instruments but also to Islam itself. It is simply unforgivable that half of all Kuwaiti citizens are prevented by law from choosing their representatives in parliament. Kuwaiti officials have yet to make a strong case against women voting on all levels of elections in the country. The Arab Gulf country is supposed to set an example for a living and fair pluralistic democracy, and disenfranchising half of the eligible population will certainly tarnish the image of Kuwait's democracy, regionally as well internationally. When we add that members of the armed forces and the police were also excluded from voting, the emerging picture is one that lacks fundamentals usually associated with contemporary democracy.

What is striking is the fact that only 170,000 out of 700,000 Kuwaiti nationals are eligible to vote. The Kuwaiti criteria for citizenship is so wanting that "citizens" would have to prove that they come from Kuwaiti ancestry before they can cast their votes. Many people in the country who including those were born there—the bedouins, and others who would be classified and considered as Kuwaitis by all international standards are being denied full citizenship rights and in effect treated as second-class nationals. We do not know of any country in the world that has classes of citizenship. As we take heart from Kuwait's democratisation, pride can never be complete as long as there are still basic shortcomings in the election law of the country.

Democracy in the Arab World is in short supply and where it exists it remains short-circuited by those shortcomings and more. Much of Arab woes could and should be attributed to the absence of genuine democracy. That is why when Kuwait crusaded for democratic steps a long time ago, all Arabs sighed with relief. Kuwait owes it to its own people, all its people as well as to the Arab Nation to complete its democratisation by amending the necessary legislations before the next round, four years from now.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i said Monday that the Arab states should follow Jordan's example of lending full support to the Palestinian leadership in its current endeavours to guarantee the implementation of the Oslo accords. Sultan Al Hattab cited King Hussein's message to the Israeli prime minister in which he stressed Jordan's stand vis-à-vis the peace process, and proposed ideas for ending the deadlock as an example of Arab action. Nothing can create apprehension in the heart of the Israelis like a united Arab front, and nothing can deter the Israeli government from committing further atrocities and carrying illegal measures like a mobilisation of all Arab potentials in the face of aggression, said the writer. He said that though the Arabs are following with deep concern the resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli talks at the Erez crossing, there is no doubt that it would take a very strong, united Arab front to persuade the Likud-led government of Israel to refrain from further acts that would obstruct progress in the negotiations. The writer said as the Arabs watch their Palestinian brothers continually facing the Israeli tanks, the Israeli repressive measures and the Israeli defiance of the world community, they are waiting to see if the U.S.-sponsored peace talks will yield any fruitful results.

A WRITER for Al Dustour Monday criticised the Muslim nations for failing to come to an agreement on concerted efforts to save the holy places from Israeli desecration and the Arab lands from occupation. Jawad Anani recalled that the Arab countries attending the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in Beijing last month had tried but failed to place the Jerusalem issue on the agenda of the parliamentarians discussions noting that Muslim nations regrettably were among countries that voted against such a move. He said that the Beijing meeting took place before the recent violence in Jerusalem, triggered by Israel's desecration of the Aqsa Mosque, but even that act failed to stir the Muslim nations to undertake united action against Israel or a measure that would safeguard the Muslim holy shrines. If desecration of the shrines does not prompt the Muslim countries to take action, what can motivate them to do so, he asked. He said that even Jews opposed to Netanyahu's government, had attacked the present Israeli government's policies, but, regrettably, many Muslim nations failed so far to lift a finger in protest against Israel's atrocities.

View from the Fourth Circle

New strategies and balances in the Middle East

By Rami G. Khouri

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The summit of Middle Eastern leaders with President Clinton that took place here last week has been widely interpreted as having been a failure; it achieved an agreement to resume Palestinian-Israeli talks on a fast track, but did not close the gaps on any of the substantive issues that separate the two sides.

This has raised the level of disappointment and concern among Arabs and others who are critical of the Netanyahu governments hardline policies, without indicating how this latest impasse might be overcome. Viewed from this vantage point in the United States, it seems that such procedural momentum without any promise of substantive progress may be the new measure of progress in the peace process, whether we like it or not. A new world is unfolding before our eyes, and it has only peripheral interest in the Middle East and its people.

Several related factors are responsible for this situation: the political strength and decisiveness of the Israeli leadership, the relative weakness of the Palestinian leadership and its apparent lack of significant Arab support, the current election season in the United States, and the emerging new strategic posture of the United States in the Middle East. All four of these factors tend to suggest that we are not necessarily approaching a turning point in Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, but rather may be adjusting to new power relationships that predominantly favour Israel over the Palestinians and the Arabs as a whole. This gloomy assessment is not pleasant for the Arabs, but it is probably one that we have to get used to in the absence of any practical evidence of Arab capabilities to change the situation for the better.

It is noteworthy that during the past two weeks, the hard-line policies of the Netanyahu government have elicited widespread criticism in the United States, but little is being done to bring about a change in those policies. The summit in Washington last week proved that: 1) the Clinton administration sincerely would like to see the Oslo process succeed, 2) the administration is willing to play an active role in pushing that process forward, but, 3) the administrative will not expend any political capital to achieve this aim. The message is that Washington will provide procedural facilitation, but no diplomatic muscle. The accepted explanation for this is the fact of the American presidential campaign: a flagging Bob Dole is waiting to pounce on any sign that Clinton may be willing to lean on Israel and pressure it into making moves that it may not be anxious to make, such as withdrawing from Hebron, providing a Gaza-West Bank corridor for Palestinian passage or freezing Israeli moves in Jerusalem.

I sense that there are also other reasons that are not spelled out. The main one is that the Middle East, especially the status of the Palestinians, no longer commands the strategic importance or urgency that it once did in Washington. This in turn reflects the perception here that Israel is strong in military, economic and political terms — so strong, in fact, that it can repeatedly defy the attempts of the American president to nudge it towards a more rea-

sonable position vis-à-vis implementing the full terms of the Oslo accords. This combination of Israeli strength, American hesitation to press Israel, and Palestinian weakness means that Israel today essentially dictates the terms and pace of the peace process.

The repeated threats of a new Palestinian intifada do not seem to generate much attention or concern around the world, mainly because of the feeling in Washington that Israel can take care of itself. Even if a new intifada breaks out, as some thought had happened two weeks ago, the world appears prepared to see this as a purely local affair that the Israelis can handle with their combination of physical closure, economic strangulation and military action. Israel's harsh military measures in Palestine and its diplomatic stubbornness in Washington seem to be accepted by the world as unfortunate aspects of the current status quo; if they are to change, we are told, such change will have to emerge from bilateral Israeli-Palestinian talks in which the United States will continue to play the role of friendly facilitator, but nothing more than this. This indicates that the primary criterion for progress in the peace process is Israel's sense of its own security, rather than the attainment of mutual national rights and security for Israelis and Palestinians. Such imbalance will further degrade the already thin credibility of the Oslo process in Palestinian and Arab eyes, thereby probably heightening popular hesitation among Egyptians and Jordanians to normalise relations with Israel.

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On the wider Middle Eastern stage, the United States seems to be quietly reassessing aspects of its strategic posture, especially towards Iran, Iraq, the Gulf and Turkey. The last round of U.S.-UK military strikes against Iraqi targets last month, viewed in retrospect, may have been the first sign of a more benign American policy. The strikes were neither militarily significant nor followed up by strong political action; in fact, they may have provided cover for a quiet American retreat from northern Iraq, where the Kurds are to be left to find their own balance among the major local players. My guess is that the United

States may be tacitly admitting that the future security balance in the Gulf and among Iran, Iraq and Turkey will have to be achieved primarily by the policies of the states in the region — if they do not threaten the main strategic interest of the United States and the rest of the industrialised world — which is the secure flow of oil and gas at reasonable prices. This presents no problems for the local players, all of whom already also find it in their interest to ensure such oil flows.

There is increasing questioning here of the wisdom of the U.S. policy of recurring military strikes against Iraq and the U.S. deepening military presence in the Gulf (there are now over 30,000 U.S. troops in the Gulf, some in permanent land bases). The U.S.-UK attacks against Iraq last month were widely seen to have resulted in something of a political victory for Saddam Hussein and the Baghdad regime, and many voices have asked if such an American policy is useful or sustainable. The unspoken question is: If Israel is strong and can take care of itself, and the Gulf powers amongst themselves can find a balance that stabilises the region and keeps their oil flowing to the rest of the world, would it not be in the interest of the United States to adopt a much lower profile in the region?

I think this is precisely what has been happening during the past month, and we may see this policy accelerated after the November U.S. presidential election. If Bill Clinton wins, this was the main message of the Washington Mideast summit last week, at which the United States showed logistical and procedural dynamism in bringing the parties together, but little else of a substantive nature. From now on, it seems, Washington will see the bringing together of people to talk peace as a major and sufficient enterprise; whether they agree, and what they may agree to, will be largely left for the Israelis to determine. Israel is the strong party for the moment, and its interests largely define the pace, nature and direction of the peace process.

This poses an enormous challenge for the Palestinians and the Arabs as a whole. To cry that this is unfair would be correct, but meaningless in the harsh new world in which we live. Only now are we witnessing the real changes that have started to occur in our region as a result of the end of the cold war, the fragmented Arab approach to Israel, and the common weaknesses that have been suffered in recent years by Iran, Iraq and the Arab Gulf oil producers. Only two aspects of the Middle East truly mean anything significant to the United States: Israel's security and continued access to reasonably priced oil. Both of those objectives can be achieved today with a relatively benign American posture in the region. The implications of this should drive us to deeper analysis and inter-Arab consultation, leading to coherent policy and action. Not to do this, while expecting Washington to rescue the peace process for us, would be to add wishful thinking to the state of weakness and fragmentation that already plagues the Arab World.

My Jerusalem, your Jerusalem: Never the twain shall meet?

By Rashid I. Khalidi

CHICAGO — For each of those with an attachment to Jerusalem, there is a different sacred topography and a different meaning for each site and event. Arab and Israeli live within the same city, but each is oblivious to the existence of the other, or at least pretends to be.

Each party to this conflict operates in a different dimension from the other, looking back to a different era of the past and living in a different present. And each party has its own name for each site a usage it tries to impose to strengthen its possession and control.

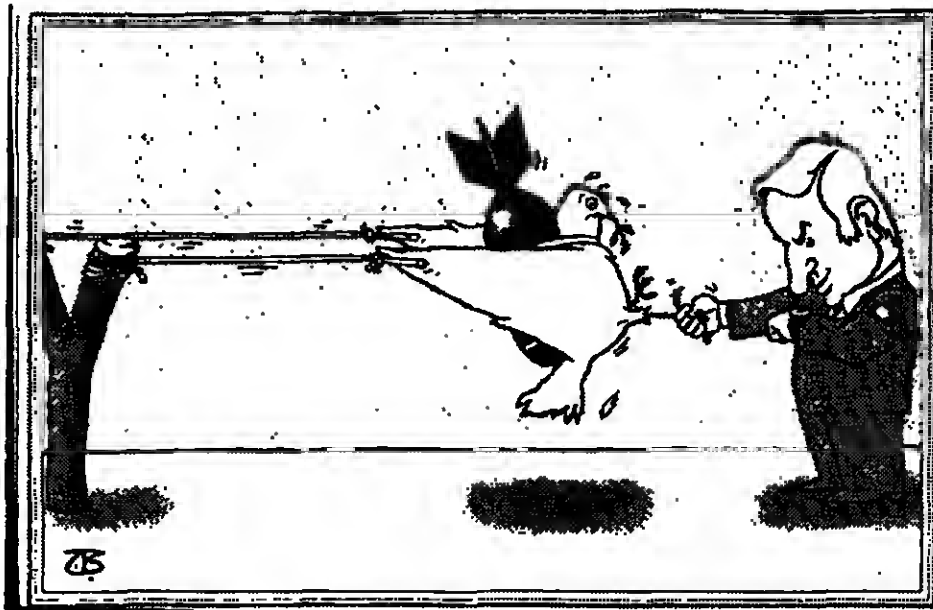
The dispute over the opening of a new entrance to an Israeli excavation running the length of the Haram Al Sharif — called the Temple Mount by Israelis — has revealed some of these dimensions.

Others remain obscure, among them the fact that this excavation tunnels under a dozen of the Holy City's most imposing and beautiful monuments of Islamic architecture alongside the Haram Al Sharif.

Statements by Israeli spokesmen make clear that this tunnel is meant to showcase only one of the 22 archaeological strata that make up Jerusalem's rich history. Such attempts to grant privileges to one stratum over others are predicated on a belief that one layer is "superior" and that the past can be manipulated to affect the present by "proving" this superiority.

If one stratum of a city can be privileged, if one set of names derived from it can be given pride of place over all others, then a certain contemporary reality claiming roots in the past can be imposed on the present.

The significance of this crisis goes far beyond the archaeological and historical side world's understanding of Jerusalem's past, and therefore of its future. It reveals the profound and perhaps fatal flaws in the



entire interim approach that America and Israel have prevented from doing so, expropriating large areas of land and crushing the Arab sector in the grip of a "security closure," which debilitated its economy.

This approach dictated that explosive issues like Jerusalem, settlements and refugees be deferred until "final status" talks, while the parties build up goodwill through interim accords.

Today, with 58 Palestinians and 15 Israelis killed, it is clear that this approach has brought precious little goodwill on either side. Indeed, it is questionable whether the existing interim accords can be carried out at all, in view of the Netanyahu government's evident determination to undermine them.

Meanwhile, the obsessive focus on the provisions of these accords at the failed Washington summit meeting and in the press serves as a red herring, distracting attention from long-term issues like Jerusalem. It should be obvious that until the final-status negotiations on Jerusalem and other issues begin, it is impossible to have a meaningful dialogue.

Against this archaeological propaganda juggernaut, Palestinians have few defences. Meanwhile, the opening of the tunnel was thus only the latest calculated insult to Palestinian aspirations and rights in a city which is holy to Muslims and Christians as well as Jews, and which is the focus of the nationalist aspirations of Palestinians, as it is of Israelis.

The Netanyahu government hopes to use the Israeli state's enormous power and the flaws in the Oslo accords to wield Jerusalem's ancient Jewish history as a weapon against the city's Arab and Islamic presence in its buildings everywhere in the Old City.

Against this archaeological propaganda juggernaut, Palestinians have few defences. Meanwhile, the opening of the tunnel was thus only the latest calculated insult to Palestinian aspirations and rights in a city which is holy to Muslims and Christians as well as Jews, and which is the focus of the nationalist aspirations of Palestinians, as it is of Israelis.

Israeli bulldozers and cement mixers are constantly at work in the hills all around the Old City, building new settlements and thereby determining Jerusalem's "final status" in a manner far more decisive than mere words. The objective is to ensure that by the time final-status talks begin, if they ever do, there will be nothing left to negotiate.

It should have dawned on American officials by now that there is little time left to avert such an outcome, which will be irrevocable and completely unacceptable to Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims.

They should know by now that if there is to be peace, it must be based on a solution for Jerusalem whereby both sides can somehow share what belongs to both. Mr. Netanyahu's alternative, exclusivist vision promises unending conflict.

The responsibility for such a future will lie not only with those in Israel who are carrying out this vision but also with those in Washington who could and should have stopped them.

The writer directs the Centre for International Studies at the University of Chicago and is president of the American Committee on

LETTERS

Free market is key to welfare

To the Editor:

JORDAN'S CURRENT drive towards privatisation could be one step towards economic growth and improved standards of living.

It is important, though, the know how it can be ensured that our country follows the path that leads to greater economic, social and political progress.

Fortunately for us, this is not an exceedingly difficult question to address. Laggard behind as an underdeveloped country has an interesting advantage: Jordan can choose from the many different paths adopted by other developing or developed nations. History has supplied humanity with many practical lessons about development, and thus a country no longer has to experiment with spontaneous, shaky and theoretical policies.

Perhaps one of the most important lessons we have learned is that the free market system is highly superior to centrally planned systems. This was made especially clear in the 1980s. While a centrally planned system advocates large state bureaucracies and government intervention, the free market system almost completely eliminates governmental bureaucracy and indulges in effective regulation rather than interference.

The establishment of free market in Jordan would require the elimination of governmental bureaucracy — a challenging yet highly rewarding endeavour. Consider, for example, that about 40 per cent of the Jordanian workforce is employed by the government. A governmental bureaucracy this large becomes a separate entity in and of itself, thus endangering many of its basic and underlying incentives. For example, when the interests of almost half of the country lie within the government, then why should one half serve the other half, and not the other way around? The government becomes self-serving and successfully maintains its own sustenance by devouring the energy and resources of the rest of the population. Historically, this has been shown to be catastrophic for both the government and the people, in the long run.

Unfortunately, many policy makers fear the short-term, rather than the long-term, consequences of their actions. For example, the short-term results of minimising bureaucracy by decreasing the governmental workforce can be done gradually, but would raise the unemployment rate and, as a consequence, exacerbate social unrest.

Naturally, a myopic politician could cringe at the mere thought of implementing this change. However, the possible long-term consequences might strongly justify its implementation. Decreasing the size of the public sector would increase the overall efficiency of the private sector. In addition, the government would draw continually less financial resources from the private sector, thus increasing both private savings and disposable income. As a result, a private investor has more money to invest, thus generating many new jobs in the long-run as new businesses and services are created. The unemployment problem is dramatically lessened, and everyone is happier and richer.

A free market system in Jordan would encourage local and international investments in the region, as well as many other positive social and economic changes. The government must ultimately become a much smaller entity, regulating businesses and ensuring equity, rather than interfering in every minor detail. Free market is a low maintenance, high return system, and it has been extremely successful wherever it was adopted.

Sa'ad Nabil Muasher,
Amman.

Mideast poised to profit from boom in Asian oil demand

NICOSIA (AFP) — Middle East oil producers are poised to benefit from a boom in world oil demand fuelled mainly by Asia but they must shake up their economies to make the most of it, international oil experts said Monday.

At a conference here on Middle East oil strategy until 2009, experts said the main future trend would be on a one-million-barrel increase in Asian oil demand per year and how Arab producers will cope. Ikuro Misumi of the Japanese ministry of international trade and industry said Asia would become increasingly dependent on Arab producers as its oil consumption rose to 98.7 million tonnes in 2010, up from 604.3 million in 1992.

"The dependency on foreign oil supplies in the entire East Asian region will reach about 70 per cent, and most of the foreign oil suppliers to the region will most likely be countries in the Middle East," Mr. Ikuro told the

conference in Cyprus.

He said China's oil consumption is likely to overtake Japan's before 2010, while demand from ASEAN nations (Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei and Malaysia) is projected to draw level.

With demand from South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong set to reach three-quarters of Japan's consumption, "there will be three more Japans out there by 2010 with the Middle East expected to meet the challenge," Mr. Ikuro said.

"As the importance of energy from the Middle East for East Asian countries continues to grow significantly, it is necessary to foster a closer relationship between the two regions," he said.

Japan wants to see more foreign investment in the Middle East, closer technological cooperation and greater dialogue between the two regions, Mr. Ikuro said.

Ismail Ibrahim, head of energy at the Organisation

of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), said world oil demand growth in 2010 is projected to reach 9.6 million barrels per day compared to 1995, with OPEC countries set to provide 96 per cent of the extra supplies.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Middle East countries will get the lion's share.

"The Middle East will be a pivotal player because of its huge reserves and low development costs," said Michael Williams, a senior IEA economist.

But they must press ahead with fiscal restraints, privatisation programmes and measures to attract foreign participation already underway to reap the maximum benefit, he said.

"If the process continues we believe they will be able to attract the necessary investment into their production to meet the growing oil demand."

"Japanese dependency on the region's oil already stands at 76 per cent while

other Asian countries are trying to develop a relationship with the Middle East right now with the likes of joint refinery projects," he added.

Other delegates to the three-day oil conference here spoke of the problems still hampering the Middle East.

Iran's deputy foreign minister Abbas Maleki said in a paper read out to the conference that "foreign interference" in the region was increasing tension and hampering economic development.

Mr. Maleki pointed to the United States' unilateral economic embargo on Iran and its threat to punish non-U.S. firms investing in the Islamic republic's energy sector.

Meanwhile, Mr. Ismail said OPEC members have to overcome the obstacles of new energy taxes and environmental measures from consumers in their bid to develop their reserves.

Clashes undermine confidence in Israel economy

TEL AVIV (R) — The latest violence between Israelis and Palestinians is undermining confidence in the Israeli economy just as it undergoes its first slowdown in seven years, investors and analysts said Monday.

"The biggest impact is with foreigners, especially new money coming in," said Jonathan Katz, chief economist at Capital Holdings Consultants. "Events since the elections — especially those of the last two weeks — have confirmed the 'let's-wait-and-see' view."

Investment from overseas has become increasingly important since Israel signed a peace accord with the Palestinians in 1993. Total foreign investment swelled to \$2.2 billion last year from \$800 million in 1994 and grew another 36 per cent in the first half of 1996.

Multinationals like Nestle, Volvo and Kim-

berly Clark have bought interests in Israeli companies, many hoping to use them as their base in the "new Middle East" created by the peace process, said Dov Tadmor, managing director of Discount Investment Corp., one of Israel's leading holding companies.

"There's no doubt the progress in Middle East peace has a crucial impact on multinational companies," he said.

Foreign investment has also been a major factor in propping up the otherwise depressed Tel Aviv stock market. In spite of a year of political traumas and violence foreigners have held on to their shares.

Michael Weiss, mutual fund manager at Evergreen Capital Markets, said foreign investors are not ready to flee yet.

But, he warns, they will watch to see that the peace process gets back on track especially during talks between Israelis and Palestinians that began Sunday.

"If the talks end without results, some will pull out," Mr. Weiss said. "Without political calm, the bourse can't recover."

Israel's high tech sector, which has led the economic boom, is relatively unaffected. "Israel's ability to nurture start-ups will continue," said Mr. Tadmor.

"It's not dependent on (a company's) physical location."

Despite the events three Israeli high-tech firms have gone public in the United States in the past two weeks while two non-high-tech issues have encountered problems in London.

For the economy, the only immediate casualty of the violence has been tourism, where industry officials say cancellations could result in \$200 million in lost revenues. In 1995, tourism earned \$3.3 billion for the economy, making it a leading sector.

But the overall economy has already begun slowing this year after heady growth of more than six per cent annually throughout the 1990s. Mr. Katz estimates gross domestic product will expand no more than 4.3 per cent this year. In the third quarter, he said, the economy may have shrunk.

Although the slowdown is mainly cyclical, Mr. Katz said the political situation has exacerbated it. "In the last few years with the peace process and immigration (from the former Soviet Union), there was general optimism," he says. "Maybe we're seeing a reaction. The political future is less clear."

Algeria pushes warily towards economic change

PARIS (R) — As Algeria warily moves forward with economic reform, analysts say it needs to balance demands of international lenders against the danger of higher unemployment, which could give a boost to armed Muslim fundamentalist rebels.

Last week the government-appointed Transitional National Council — which operates like a parliament — begins examining the budget and privatisation law the North African country hopes will bring foreign investment.

"The authorities are very much boxed in and need to proceed carefully," one Western economic expert in Algiers said by telephone. "They have 30 per cent jobless, and if reforms go ahead too fast what are you going to do with those extra people that you put on the streets?" the expert said.

Algerian officials blame poverty for the battle between Muslim rebels and

the security forces. The fighting started after the army in 1992 cancelled general elections the Islamists were poised to win. The fighting has killed 50,000 and caused \$2 billion in damages from sabotage.

Algeria gets more than 95 per cent of its foreign revenue from the state-owned oil and gas firm Sonatrach.

It also relies on massive loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which demand economic reform in return, including building up foreign currency reserves, now estimated at \$2 billion.

The IMF, for its part, seems to think that Algeria is on the right track.

IMF Director Michel Camdessus last week in Washington said: "Algeria continues to respect performance criteria."

But the cost of this is high — in terms of how the government copes with unrest at home, diplomats and others say.

Diplomats have long said that Algerian industry, outside the oil and gas sector, was overmanned, inefficient and producing expensive products no-one wanted.

Officials have also expressed worry that mass layoffs, seen as needed to kickstart industry, would send recruits to Muslim radicals fighting to topple the government.

"There's an average 7.5 people living in each, often small, apartment, and 600,000 new people every year," a European diplomat said.

"It's the bomb that exploded in 1988," he added, referring to poverty riots then that forced the start of political reform after nearly 30 years of one-party rule over a state-owned economy.

President Liamine Zerroul probably was thinking of the discontent of the country's 29 million people when he gave a closing speech after a five day conference on economic and social reform.

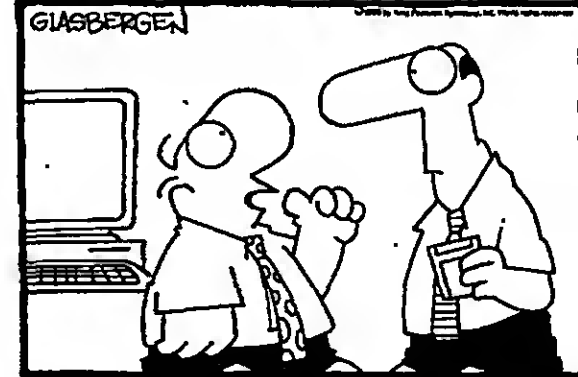
In remarks carried by the Algerian media, he said he was convinced the country would soon see an economic takeoff and durable development but said the country could not envisage economic development without social objectives.

He also heard warnings the main UGTA union would defend jobs in 400 mainly inefficient, overmanned state-funded enterprises that employ 1.7 million people, or more than 30

per cent of the workforce. One housing expert said that Algeria was short of 1.2 million dwellings and needed to build more than 200,000 each year to overcome this.

"They have a truly difficult situation to face. If they lift imports to boost construction and provide jobs, they run counter to the macro-economic demands," an economic analyst told Reuters.

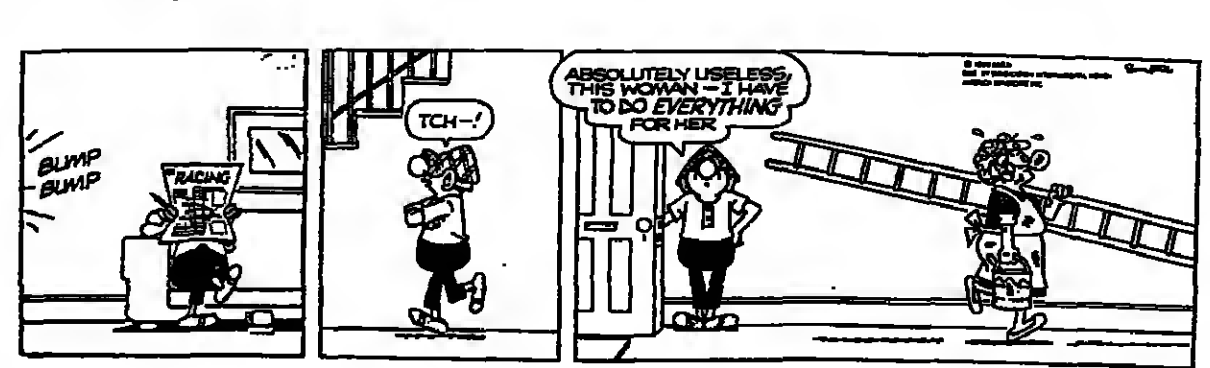
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



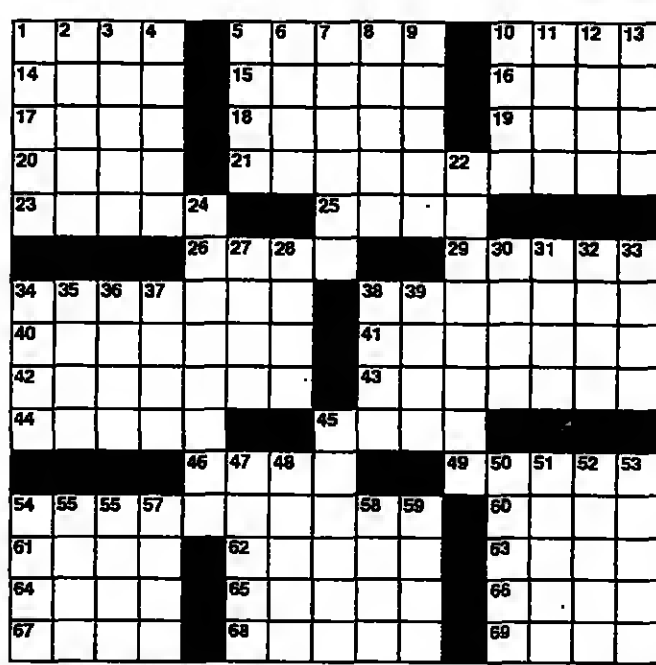
Mutt'n'Jeff



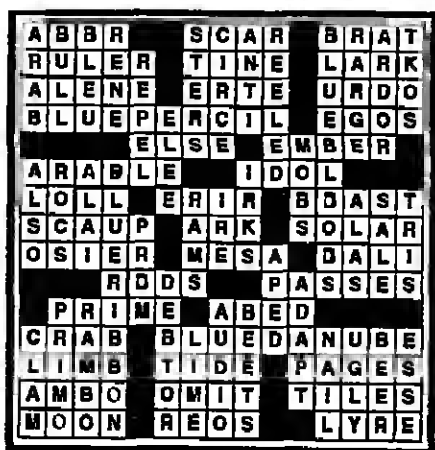
THE Daily Crossword by Don Johnson

ACROSS

- 1 Singa
- 5 Last frontier
- 10 Play
- 14 Sandwich type
- 15 Perceived by the ear
- 16 Woodwind
- 17 Toast spread
- 18 Playground feature
- 19 Brume
- 20 Customary practice
- 21 Butcher's offering
- 23 Cache
- 25 Chit
- 26 Time periods
- 29 Clear jelly
- 34 Greenery, of a kind
- 38 Wine
- 40 Ruffled passageways
- 41 Outstanding athlete
- 42 Unnerves
- 43 Groups of pupils
- 44 Musical direction
- 45 Actor Connery
- 46 Retreat
- 49 Fold
- 50 Shark
- 54 Pitcher
- 56 Hershiser
- 61 — vara
- 62 Family circle member
- 63 Wading bird
- 64 Tilt
- 65 Miss — of "Dallas"
- 66 Throw off
- 67 Ward off
- 68 Vehicles
- 69 Bargain event



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- #### DOWN
- 1 Haavysed dogs
 - 2 Spartan slave
 - 3 Place of combat
 - 4 Haley novel
 - 5 Obi
 - 6 Whimper
 - 7 Certain zodiac people

- 8 Certain Indian
- 9 Choosa
- 10 Elemental City
- 11 Off-Broadway award
- 12 Playwright Hart
- 13 Fountain
- 22 Promontory
- 24 Newspaper caption
- 27 Double curva
- 28 Loch
- 30 Meeting: abbr.
- 31 Excavations
- 32 Dias
- 33 Vehicles
- 34 Zhivago's love
- 35 Geologic divisions
- 36 Biblical book
- 37 — morgana
- 38 Heavy club
- 39 — brave
- 45 "Remington —"
- 47 Sea eagles
- 48 Barker's confederate
- 50 Kentucky Derby prize
- 51 Flavor
- 52 Danger
- 53 Lift the spirits
- 54 Moleaty
- 55 Nautical word
- 56 Sound of distress
- 57 Fix
- 58 Biting
- 59 Passing grades

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY OCTOBER 8, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you have any difficulties this morning, solve them wisely and handle outside affairs in a very beneficial manner. Later this evening will be good for you to consult with knowledgeable people and devise a plan of action.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Get your appearance improved today and then solve some difficulties with another. Enjoy social life later this evening with close friends and thereby you can have a fun time together while out on the town.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Look for these persons today who can assist you the most in your endeavours and they will cooperate fully so that you can be very successful. Later tonight you can discuss career activities with a bigwig and make great progress.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Being with good friends who comprehend your needs today is wise so make the best of any opportunities. Study your social life later this evening and determine the best course of action to be taken in the days ahead.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Handle material affairs most wisely today and you can become prosperous. Meet a new fellow associate and pool your experiences for success in the days ahead. Later this evening you can go out on the town with your mate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your ideas are fine today for progressing in your line of endeavour and thereby making your life more prosperous. Improve your personal life by planning some special event for your mate which will be very pleasant.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Follow your intuition today and handle business matters much better so that you will become very successful. Discuss financial affairs with your mate later this evening and come upon a mutually agreed upon plan of action.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can cement better relations today with fellow associates and later handle the difficulties which have been irritating you so that you can proceed in such a manner which will bring you much success.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If you are enthused about your activities today, start the day beautifully however watch for any difficulties which could be present. Later this evening you can discuss your career activities with a bigwig and gain insight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Make plans for interesting amusements in the days ahead and you can spend it with loved ones or close friends. Handle tasks which are important later this evening and thereby you can gain the admiration of a bigwig.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Tonight do something which will please your mate and thereby you will please your other loved ones. Early today you can meet with a fellow associate and decide upon the best course of action for the days ahead.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get to the core of difficulties with others today and you can solve them quickly and tactfully. Later this evening you can discuss any plans of action whereby you can make the best effort with fellow associates.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

IFC has record lending year, plans expansion of activities

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a World Bank arm investing in private sector projects in developing countries, has approved a record \$3.2 billion for 264 projects in fiscal 1996.

The IFC, in a report on its fiscal year ending June 30, said its equity participation and lending activities in 1996 represented the fifth consecutive annual increase in financing. The total in 1995 came to \$2.9 billion. In addition, the IFC said its efforts to arrange financing by banks and other partners had resulted in the mobilisation of \$4.8 billion an 88 per cent increase over fiscal 1995.

The share of Asian banks rose from 16 to 20 per cent, while the participation of U.S.-based lenders increased from five to 13 per cent.

"IFC continued its strong growth fiscal year 1996," said Jannik Lindbaek, IFC executive vice-president. "It is a time of opportunity for IFC. The corporation's services are increasingly in demand in a world where the need for greater efficiency and improved services is

causing a trend towards the private operation of key infrastructure sectors..." he added.

"We are devoting increased resources to small and medium-sized enterprises. And we are extending IFC's reach into countries where we have had limited

activity until now," the senior IFC official indicated. The report disclosed that the IFC would be launching a new initiative to expand its range to smaller and poorer nations, as well as those in transition to market economies.

The IFC will increase staff

in 16 countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, several small island nations in the Caribbean as well as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The corporation has also created a \$40 million small enterprise fund to support small-scale investments in

the new regions.

The IFC, which increased its membership this year to 170, reported an 84 per cent increase in net income over fiscal 1995 to \$345.8 million.

The corporation approved projects in 68 countries in fiscal 1996, with sub-Saharan Africa the beneficiary of 71 programmes, the most of any region.

IFC investment in agribusiness and food processing continued to expand, according to the report, which also highlighted the corporation's involvement in infrastructure, environmental and privatisation projects.

In Kenya for example the IFC advised authorities handling the privatisation of Kenya Airways, the second largest such operation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Overall, Africa south of the Sahara received \$174 million in financing from the IFC for 71 projects in 20 countries. The report said 42 of the projects costing \$46 million in 13 countries helped create or preserve 19,000 jobs.

In Asia, the IFC approved financing worth \$888 million on its own account and arranged an additional \$1.885 billion through loan syndicates for 53 projects in 12 countries.

The report said the sharp increase in the value of Asian investment over 1995, when a total of \$691 million was committed, "reflects the continuing brisk pace of economic growth in Asia, which continued to outpace all other developing and developed regions."

Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa received \$517 million in direct IFC financing for 38 projects, along with \$381 million through IFC-mobilised syndicates.

The corporation committed \$406 million to 38 projects in 13 countries in Europe.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, IFC direct investment in 63 projects in 14 countries was valued at \$1.3 billion in fiscal 1996. An additional \$2.4 billion was raised through syndicates.

REUTERS • REUTERS •

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.5315	0.6396	1.2580	111.28	1.3531	1515.75	1.7178	5.1715	
DE Mark	0.6396		0.4172	0.6200	0.8831	988.07	1.1216	3.3764	
GB Sterling	1.5635	1.5635		1.9626	2.1156	2369.86	2.6858	6.0656	
CHF Franc	0.7862	1.2184	0.5086		88.56	1.0765	1205.85	136.89	4.1142
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3784	0.5741	1.1280		1.2152	13.61	164.27	4.6444
CAD Dollar	0.7380	1.1203	0.4980	0.9179	1.22		11.14	11.33	3.7934
IT Lira	0.0007	1.0086	0.4215	0.0828	1384.07	0.8922			
NL Guilder	0.5821	89.10	0.3718	73.11	64.72	0.7872	882.07		3.0088
FR Franc	0.1934	0.2960	0.1235	24.2729	21.49	0.2615	33.20	33.2000	

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4086	0.17054	0.33517	29.6903				
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.4174	0.1742	0.34237	30.3276				
KW Dinar	3.3333	5.10725	2.13174	4.16936	371.195				
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.40804	1.69664	3.33444	295.334				
CY Pound	2.1344	3.2864	1.3643	2.8604	237.419				

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Currency	Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	1 Year				
USD	5.18	5.31	5.43	5.50	5.68				
GBP	5.66	5.81	5.72	6.00	6.12				
JPY	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.43	0.56				
DEM	3.00	3.03	3.03	3.05	3.10				
FRF	3.31	3.40	3.46	3.50	3.56				
CHF	1.25	1.31	1.31	1.37	1.52				
ITL	6.26	7.92	7.88	7.52	7.50				

Main Equity Indices									
Source	Index	Value	Chg.	% Chg.	High	Low	Open	Close	P.C.
New York	DOW JONES	5987.27	-5.59	-0.09	6002.17	5980.56	5992.86		
New York	S&P 500	702.45	0.39	0.14	704.17	701.39	701.45		
London	FT-SE 100	4031.5	6.7	0.17	4046.8	4030.3	4024.8		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	21161.01	12.88	0.06	21161.01	21031.6	21148.8		
Paris	CAC 40	2151.55	-1.44	-0.05	2160.16	2148.38	2152.69		
Frankfurt	DAX	2702.64	19.36	0.72	2704.74	2686.54	2683.28		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lb)	118.87	Spot							
Sugar (c/lb)	351.1	Spot							
Soybean (c/lb)	332.1	Spot							
Wheat (c/lb)	166	Spot							
Barley (c/lb)	22.02	Spot							
Feed (c/lb)	120	Spot							
Barley (c/lb)	2.57	Spot							
Rice (c/lb)	465	Spot							

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.058	1.1114
DE Mark	0.4621	0.4644
CH Franc	0.3624	0.3652
FR Franc	0.1365	0.1372
JP Yen	0.6337	0.6368
NL Guilder	0.4118	0.4139
IT Lira	0.4652	0.4675

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTRAL BANK - SECURITIES										
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 07/10/1996										
PART 12	NUMBER	COMPANY'S NAME	P / M	DEV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	PRICE	CHANGE	
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
252,000	205,000	ARAB BANK	13.3	1.44	10	240	58225	242.50	242.75	-25
1,230	880	MID. EAST DEV. BK.	70.9	0.00	19	8752	9515	1.04	2.08	-
2,780	3,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.2	4.19	1	350	338	2.77	2.35	-02
0,285	4,350	THE HOUSING BK.	13.0	2.83	4	847	256	1.05	4.87	-03
3,040	2,600	JOR. EDU. BANK	19.4	0.00	8	2296	2296	2.71	2.68	-03
1,210	890	JOR. GULF BANK	5.5	7.53	5	4800	4579	0.92	-	-02
4,100	4,100	JOR. TEL. BANK	19.0	0.00	3	285	1442	2.76	2.74	-03
3,410	3,050	WEST. J. BANK (S.A.)	1.3	7.43	5	1280	2520	2.05	2.02	-03
1,000	250	AMMAN BANK DEV.	9	0.00	1	2000	2000	1.29	0.17	-
1,440	1,000	PELLOL. DEV. BK.	9	0.00	4	1050	1429	1.38	1.36	-02
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 187.81			CHG: +0.05		60	22121	85608			
1,900	1,450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.2	7.45	8	2862	4122	1.60	1.61	-01*
2,090	1,080	MAR. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	11	4819	5708	1.23	1.23	-
2,860	2,130	ARAB INT. DEV. BK.	15.5	5.80	1	500	1775	2.46	1.46	-
1,260	980	SARFA EDUCATION	9	0.00	4	3003	2275	1.13	1.13	-02
2,430	1,760	ORFED CO.	9.6	5.49	2	650	1099	1.83	1.83	-01
1,200	820	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	85	46	0.92	0.91	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 112.47			CHG: +0.01		21	10321	14914			
1,260	1,200	ALTAJAWAH	0.00	0.00	2	300	312	1.10	1.04	-06*
3,770	3,000	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.8	0.00	2	1384	4226	3.28	3.28	-
3,350	2,710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	34.4	0.00	2	15100	47200	3.10	3.10	-01*
8,960	4,780	ARAB POTASH CO.	10.6	3.64	1	252	1346	5.00	5.00	-
10,350	6,720	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	9.4	8.62	10	1731	16002	9.29	9.28	-01
7,600	7,000	JORDAN TANNING	7.7	8.00	2	270	184	2.20	2.20	-
5,590	5,000	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	59.1	0.00	1	250	322	1.29	1.33	-04*
7,750	4,850	INDUSTRIAL COM. AC.	29.3	0.00	1	998	1732	2.20	2.18	-02
4,870	4,100	ARAB BANK DEV.	29.5	5.62	11	1099	2891	3.68	3.66	-04*
13,150	9,800	AMAS CHEN. WASTE	26.8	1.06	2	166	1627	9.80	9.00	-
0,000	4,250	DAR ALHANA DEV. INV.	12.1	4.24	2	279	1310	4.74	4.72	-03
5,800	1,300	ARAB BANK DEV.	7.7	5.00	2	250	366	3.47	3.49	-02
960	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	26	23200	22164	0.69	0.64	-03
1,100	1,060	ARAB PAPER CONV. CO.	9.3	8.49	2	690	791	1.24	1.22	-02
1,090	620	INDUST. LINES	9.5	3.38	6	4300	2762	6.5	6.5	-01
1,940	1,040	INTECH. DEV. CO.	9	0.00	6	1780	1980	1.13	1.13	-
3,550	2,380	INTV. CO. LEB.	72.4	0.00	15	500	810	2.73	2.70	-03
4,700	4,020	ACADIA CO.	22.4	3.00	1	500	2000	6.03	6.03	-
4,250	2,450	RAIL CARB. WKS. MPAC	14.4	0.00	2	125	296	2.45	2.37	-08
2,100	1,080	ARAB PHARM. CO.	44.9	0.00	9	250	3175	1.37	1.33	-04
1,670	1,060	TAVERNE EXHIBIT	48.5	4.44	4	482	449	2.55	2.55	-
3,280	1,600	UNIV. MOD. LEB.	6.9	12.35	4	780	1215	1.63	1.62	-01
2,100	2,440	JOR. CHNG. RESOURCES	17.6	0.00	9	400	8787	2.42	2.42	-01*
1,840	950	JOR. RES. COM. CO.	85.5	0.00	2	1300	127	0.84	0.94	-
2,460	1,750	EL-SAY KADY WEAR	9	0.00	1	40	93	1.84	2.85	-01
1,090	1,090	JFTL. TOBACCO	26.4	0.00	9	1800	4314	1.15	1.14	-03
2,100	1,220	UNION CH. & VEG.	27.8	0.00	3	1000	1794	1.14	1.11	-02
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 111.20			CHG: +0.05		125	76149	132950			
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 147.80		CHG: +0.05		226	110991	233273	
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 07/10/1996										
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
800	610	JOR. TRADE PAC.	16.5	0.00	7	7850	6867	0.61	0.62	-
950	740	RAIL CARB. WKS. MPAC	15	0.00	12	3300	2795	0.81	0.83	-02*
1,120	700	WITON DEV. CO.	72.9	0.00	34	181750	42052	0.75	0.76	-01
1,640	510	ARAB FIV. INVT.	9	0.00	9	15800	8415	0.54	0.53	-01
1,760	1,060	JOR. IND. RES. DEV.	9	0.00	1	250	100	0.48	0.48	-
1,000	520	RAIL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	11	1382	2248	1.42	1.42	-
1,100	500	RAIL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	11	4000	4913	0.81	0.81	-
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1,100	500	RAIL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	11	4000	4913	0.81	0.81	-
1,1										

World Airlines Squash Tournament

RJ defeats Lufthansa, New Guinea

By Roufan Nabhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian's squash team Monday scored a convincing 5-2 win over New Guinea to record their second win at the 11th World Airlines Squash Tournament currently underway at Al Hassan Squash Centre.

In other matches, Swissair beat Ansett New Zealand 6-1 and British Airways crushed Cathay Pacific with a 6-0 win. RJ's team had won their first match of the six-day tournament Sunday evening when they beat Lufthansa 6-1. The British Airways team also won 6-1 over New Zealand. Qantas defeated Ansett Australia by the same score and Emirates beat Ansett New Zealand 7-0.

RJ Squash Club Chairman Captain Jawdat Ahd Munem expressed his satisfaction with the tournament and the performance of the RJ team.

"Everything is excellent. We are satisfied with our players' performance and I hope that Jordan will secure first place," he told the Jordan Times.

Captain Ahd Munem added that World Airline Squash Federation will soon be based here in Jordan.

"It was agreed that World Airline Squash Federation will be based here in Jordan and that is a great move to promote Jordan internationally," he added.

Meanwhile guests of the RJ expressed their satisfaction with the tournament.

Bob Ward manager of New Zealand team, told the Jordan Times that he was extremely happy to be here.

"I am so glad that I am part of the tournament where everything is well-organised."

Joe Pygall from British Airways said: "It is fantastic." Swissair's Arlette Jost added: "It is so great to have a close look at Jordan's historical sites."

The teams have the chance to see the best of Jordan's touristic sites during their six-day stay.

The tournament, held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, opened Saturday at Al Hussein Sports City with 17 international airline companies taking part.

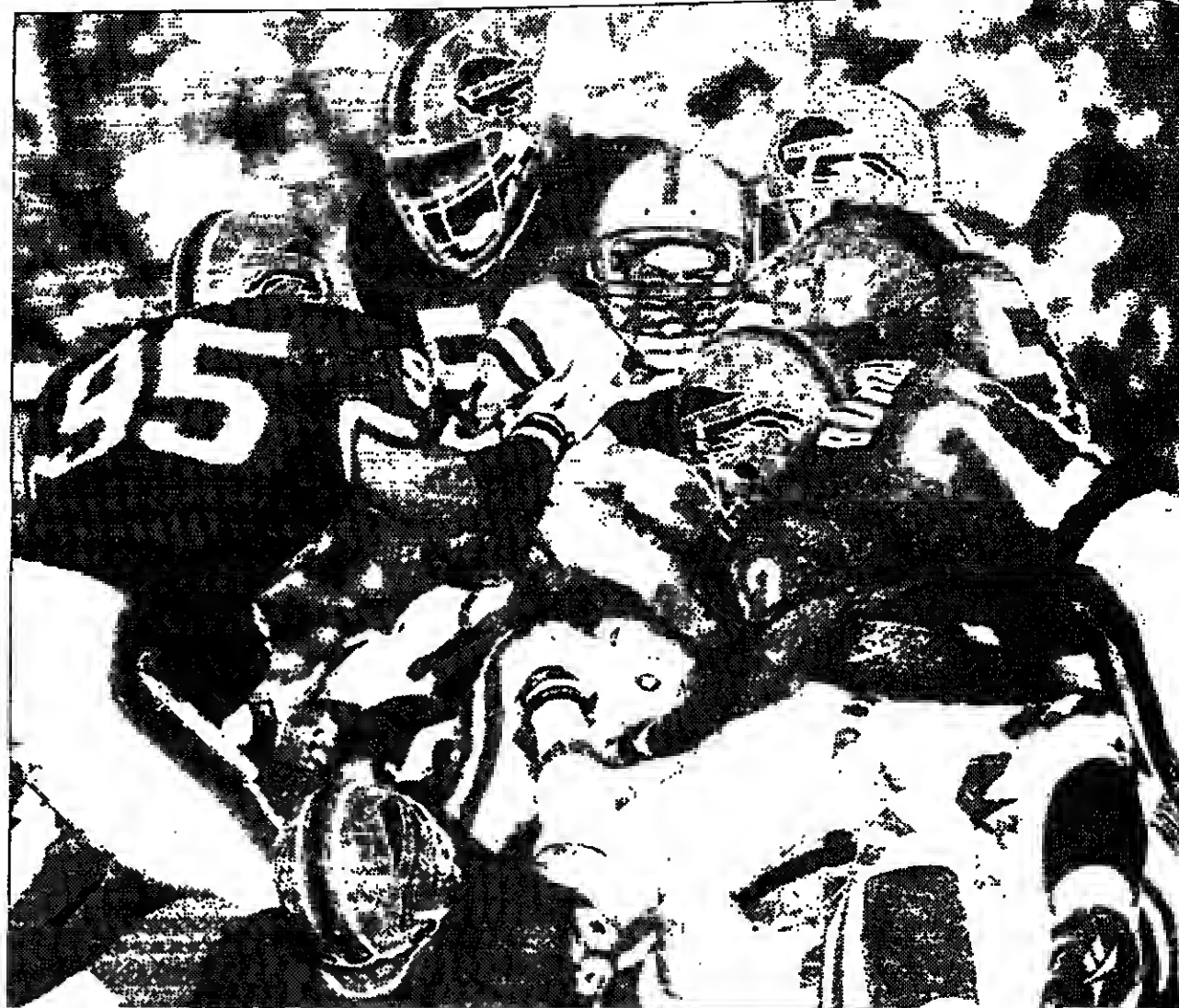
The hosting of the competition in Amman follows last year's title win for the Royal Jordanian (RJ) squash team in the 10th tournament in Dubai after a convincing 5-2 win over British Airways.

The competition, organised by the RJ Squash Club brings together teams from the following airlines: Ansett New Zealand, Ansett Australia, Lufthansa, Emirates, New Guinea, Cathay Pacific, Hunting Cargo Dublin, British Airways, Qantas, Air New Zealand, Syrian Arab Airlines, Egypt Air, Gulf Air, Sabena, Singapore Airlines, Swissair, and Royal Jordanian.

Royal Jordanian has two teams participating.

Team A includes: Captain Jawdat Abdel Munem, Yazan Addas, Wael Tabalat, Mohammad Saeed, Qutab Hawamdeh, Yazan Abdel Raouf, Hamed Saeed, Samia Hunidi, Arwa Saeed and Rima Jawdat.

Team B: Mazen Matar, Khaled Saeed, Zakaria Rifai, Imad Sharadeh, Hussein Shohaki, Abed Qader Raideh, Safwan Sharifi, Suha Bitar, Abeer Akasheh and Mai Bat.



Indianapolis Colts Quarterback Jim Harbaugh (4) is downed by the Buffalo Bills defense, holding him on a crucial third-down in the second quarter at Rich Stadium in Orchard Park October 6. Bills' Bryce Paup (95) at left with Mark Maddox (55), Jeff Burris (22) and at rear Sam Rogers (59) (Reuters photo)

Bills beat Colts in overtime

NFL STANDINGS

American Football Conference

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
Buffalo	4	1	0	72	74
Indianapolis	4	1	0	89	66
Miami	3	2	0	119	79
New England	3	2	0	125	104
NY Jets	0	6	0	75	166

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
Pittsburgh	3	1	0	94	63
Indianapolis	1	5	0	128	116
Baltimore	2	3	0	104	130
Jacksonville	2	4	0	116	119
Cincinnati	1	4	0	97	112

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
Denver	5	1	0	144	93
Kansas City	4	1	0	110	75
San Diego	4	2	0	145	144
Oakland	2	4	0	119	113
Seattle	2	4	0	93	153

National Football Conference

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
Washington	4	1	0	103	56
Philadelphia	3	2	0	106	111
Arizona	2	3	0	82	131
Dallas	2	3	0	87	76
NY Giants	2	3	0	58	97

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
Green Bay	5	1	0	204	72
Minnesota	5	1	0	114	92
Detroit	4	2	0	141	87
Chicago	2	4	0	80	125
Tampa Bay	0	5	0	45	126

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pf	Pa
San Francisco	4	1	0	135	62
Carolina	3	2	0	100	71
St. Louis	1	4	0	75	126
New Orleans	1	5	0	87	137
Atlanta	0	5	0	82	152

lead. In Detroit, Scott Mitchell threw three touchdown passes and ran for another as the Detroit Lions survived three rushing touchdowns by Jamal Anderson to post a 28-24 victory over the winless Atlanta Falcons.

Mitchell scored on a two-yard run 7:56 into the game and added a nine-yard touchdown pass to Brett Perriman and a pair of scoring strikes to Herman Moore in the second quarter to stake the Lions to a 28-0 lead.

At Minnesota, Warren Moon hooked up with Cris Carter for a pair of touchdowns and the Minnesota Vikings forced six Carolina turnovers, including four interceptions, to defeat the Panthers 14-12.

The win kept the Vikings (5-1) tied with Green Bay for first-place in the NFC central.

Moon completed 19-of-34 passes for 209 yards and moved ahead of Dan Fouts into third-place on the all-time pass yardage list with 43,105 yards.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, the Jets crashed again, losing 34-13 to the Oakland Raiders.

Jeff Hostetler threw three touchdown passes and Joe Aska rushed for a career-high 136 yards for Oakland.

The Raiders (2-4) held the Jets to a pair of Nick Lowery field goals before rookie Alex Van Dyke's three-yard touchdown reception with 3:48 remaining.

The Jets have lost their first six games this season and 19 of 22 games since the 1995 season.

In St. Louis, Elvis Grbac, subbing for the injured Steve Young, threw three touchdown passes — two to backup tight end Ted

Benson and one to San Francisco's Jerry Jones (4-1) won their 13th straight game against the Rams (1-4), 28-11.

Grbac connected with Popson on a one-yard touchdown pass with 3:59 left in the first quarter and on a nine-yard scoring strike with 5:48 left in the first half for a 21-0 lead.

In Denver, John Elway threw for 323 yards and four touchdowns, including three in 15-minutes, bridging the second and third quarters, as the Broncos rallied from a 17-point deficit to defeat the San Diego Chargers 28-17.

Elway completed 32-of-41 passes for the Broncos, who lead the AFC West at 5-1. He threw three TD strikes to tight end Shannon Sharpe, who had scoring receptions of 20, 20 and three yards, tied a franchise record with 13 catches for 153 yards.

In New Orleans, Jim Everett threw a six-yard TD pass to Torrance Small with 1:45 left as the Saints rallied to defeat the Jacksonville Jaguars 17-13 for their first win.

With Jacksonville (2-4) leading 13-10, New Orleans (1-5) executed a nine play, 69-yard drive, led by Everett, who completed 10-of-28 for 161 yards.

In Cincinnati, Al Del Greco's 49-yard field goal just over seven minutes into overtime lifted the Houston Oilers past the Cincinnati Bengals 30-27.

The Bengals had a chance to win the game on the final play of regulation but Doug Pelfry's 41-yard field goal went wide right. Cincinnati won the toss and elected to receive the ball to start overtime. After a defensive stop the Oilers took over deep in their end and drove for the winning score.

Istanbul jumps Olympic gun

ISTANBUL (AFP) —

Istanbul aims to steal a march on its 10 rival cities for the 2004 Games by putting out to tender work on a brand new Olympic stadium.

"Whether we get the games or not we intend to go ahead with the stadium," Istanbul Olympic bidding committee general director Yalcin Aksoy said Monday.

"The main motive behind this bid is to build a sporting generation although we do, of course, acknowledge the impact the Games would have on the economy," he added.

He said the Turkish Olympic Committee was stung into action after winning a mere seven votes when they bid for the 2000 Games in 1993 and went out in the first round. Sydney eventually beat Beijing for the Games by just two votes.

"We realised we were not taken seriously. International Olympic Committee members thought we were simply in it for the publicity," he said.

Since then the Turkish Olympic Committee has spent \$20 million investing in projects, ensuring that work on new venues comes up to Olympic standard. A staggering \$121 million has gone into building 11 new grounds and upgrading 16 other facilities in Istanbul in the last 36 months.

"I think we can safely say we are serious," Aksoy said.

Money from the state lottery, football pools and horse racing adds up to \$15 million annually for the Turkish Olympic Committee and the government had underwritten a provisional budget of \$1.5 billion for the Games.

"After Atlanta we know the state's involvement is vital," Aksoy said.

Turkey, which in 1992

became the only country to write the Olympic charter into its law-books, has also gained the approval of all but five of the 28 international sports federations for its proposed sites and competition dates.

An IOC evaluation commission, on a fact-finding tour of the 11 candidate cities, visits Istanbul in two weeks. It will report back in January and a short-list of four or five cities will be named in March. The IOC votes for the 2004 Games hosts next September.

Athens, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Lille (France), Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Juan (Puerto Rico), Seville, Stockholm and St. Petersburg are the other candidates.

Fowler, Matteo to miss Poland clash

LONDON (AFP) — Liverpool pair Robbie Fowler and Dominic Matteo will miss England's World Cup qualifying clash with Poland at Wembley on Wednesday after injury forced the youngsters to return to Merseyside for treatment.

Both missed training at Bisham Abbey over the weekend with Fowler again hit by an ankle problem which had previously ruled him out of international action. Matteo, who had made the squad after training in some non-demanding displays in the Liverpool backline this season, has had his hopes of a debut for his country shattered for the time being by a niggling knee injury.

Manager Glenn Hoddle will not call in replacements just three days before the group two qualifier, believing he has adequate cover within the remaining 21 members of his squad.



Italian cyclist Nicola Minelli (C) wins the sprint finish ahead of Belgian Tom Stells (L) in the Paris-Tours cycle race. This year's race was the 100th anniversary of this French classic (Reuters photo)

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA

Kevin Costner ... in
WATERWORLD

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:30, 10:45

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA

The Arab Cinema Surprise
Ahmad Zaki ...in
NASER 56
(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
FRENCH KISS
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Ammoun Theatre & Cinema
TEL: 618274 - 618275

Today presents Zawad Weld Awad
theatre group in the play entitled
Five-Star Government
Starring comedians:
Mahmoud Saimeh
& **Hussein Tubishat**
Play starts 8:30 p.m.

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
TEL: 625155

PRESENTS
THE SATIRICAL COMEDY
Arab Human Rights
At 8:30 p.m.
For reservation please call
625155 - 640155

Wihdat move up to 5th; Ahli meet Qadissieh today

By e Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Wihdat Monday scored a 2-0 win over Al Qozazi moving up one place to fifth following the first of their postponed matches in the Premier League soccer competition.

Al Wihdat still have two matches to go and have a chance to further improve their standing before the first leg of the competition is concluded next week.

However, they have difficult opponents in their two remaining matches against Al Ramtha and Al Hussein.

Al Ahli and Al Qadissieh fight it out in another postponed match Tuesday with Al Ahli looking for a win that will enable them to keep their place among the top three.

The other postponed matches include Thursday's match between Al Faisali and last placed Qozazi who have yet to score a win. Al Faisali are currently fourth with 13 points in the overall standings.

Third placed Al Ramtha meet titleholders Al Wihdat Friday while Al Hussein play the last match of the first leg Oct. 14 when they meet Al Wihdat in the replayed match which was halted last week because of technical irregularities.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Hussein	7	4	3	0	11	4	15
Ahli	8	4	3	1	18	9	15
Ramtha	8	4	3	1	11	5	15
Faisali	7	3	4	0	11	5	13
Wihdat	6	3	3	0	10	4	12
Qadissieh	8	2	4	2	12	12	10
S. Hussein	1	4	3	8	12	7	7
Jazireh	8	1	3	4	4	10	6
Karfour	9	3	3	5	4	18	4
Qozazi	7	2	5	5	5	15	2

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Romania to replace injured Sabau

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanian midfielder Ovidiu Sabau will miss Wednesday's World Cup qualifier against Iceland in Reykjavik and will be replaced by Basarab Panduru, coach Anghel Iordanescu said on Monday. "Sabau has a pulled muscle. We had to call up Panduru to replace him," Iordanescu said by telephone minutes before the team's departure to Reykjavik. Romania are heavily favoured to defeat Iceland, who lost 2-0 to Lithuania at the weekend.

Vietnam soccer final disrupted

HANOI (R) — Vietnam's national soccer final was marred by violence on Sunday when the losing Ho Chi Minh City police force team attacked the referee. Television pictures showed a rough and chaotic game during which a succession of injured players were carried off and nine yellow and red cards were shown. But the climax came after the closing whistle when players from the police team, defeated 3-1 by the dong thap province side, pushed, kicked and punched the referee as he ran off the pitch.

Ziege, Strunz out of German team

BONN (R) — Germany's already-depleted squad was further hit Monday when Christian Ziege and Thomas Strunz pulled out of the trip to Armenia for their opening world cup qualifier with knee and back injuries. The European champions were already without several key players from their Euro 96 campaign including Borussia Dortmund libero Matthias Sammer and Bayern Munich defender Thomas Helmer. But now coach Berti Vogts has been forced to rearrange his defence following the withdrawal of Ziege and Strunz. Dortmund veteran Juergen Kohler, who missed most of the Euro 96 finals because of injury, is expected to take over as sweeper. Vogts has four uncapped players in his squad and may give Borussia Moenchengladbach's defensive midfielder Stephan Passlack his international debut.

Algeria return to form

JOHANNESBURG (R) —

Algeria bounced back from World Cup disappointment with a convincing 4-1 victory over the Ivory Coast at the start of the 1998 African Nations' Cup qualifying campaign in Algiers on Sunday.

The one-sided victory — one of 14 qualifying matches played on the continent at the weekend — came just months after the North Africans' shock elimination from the 1998 World Cup in the early qualifying round.

Their 3-2 aggregate defeat by Kenya in June led to the dissolution of the Algerian Federation and a life ban on coaching in the country for Ali Fergani, a former World Cup hero who had taken Algeria to the 1996 Nations' Cup quarter-finals at the start of the year. But a dominant performance in the group two match on Sunday, masterminded by acting coach Hamid Zoubi, put Algerian soccer back on track.

Ghana came back from conceding an early goal to Angola in group one in Accra on Sunday to triumph 2-1 with the winner scored by English-based striker Kim Grant.

Zambia were also victors in their group seven encounter against Mozambique in Lusaka on Sunday but played a rear-guard action for most of the match after Kenneth Malitoli had given them a fourth-minute

lead.

Egypt were held to a 1-1 draw by Morocco in group three in Cairo Friday while Zaire also drew at home against the Liberian team.

Coppel to manage Man. City

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Steve Coppel is the new manager of first division Manchester City, ending the club's 42-day search for Alan Ball's successor.

Coppel, whose playing career with Manchester United and England was cut short by injury, will travel north from his London home to meet chairman Francis Lee and club officials.

Coppel has taken the job after resigning as technical director at Crystal Palace just 12 days after current Palace boss Dave Bassett, who replaced Coppel as manager at Selhurst Park, turned down the Maine Road job.

Coppel confirmed his appointment this morning, saying: "It's a terrific challenge. I am delighted it's settled and I can get on with the task ahead of me."

"Manchester City have to be one of the best supported clubs in the country. Because of that, and the way the game is structured now financially, they have to be one of the biggest clubs in the country."

"I think it's only a matter of time before Manchester City are back to the premiership among the big names. They have wonderful fans and we might need just a little patience."

Bassett, George Graham, Bruce Rioch, Howard Kendall and Willie Donachie all turned down the offer to become City's new boss.

Lee said he was delighted with the choice of Coppel, who led Palace to promotion to the top flight and to an FA Cup final in 1990 in his first spell at Selhurst Park.

"I like everything I have heard about Steve Coppel, particularly his record with young players and how he has brought them on," he explained.

"It has taken a bit of time to bring someone in but we were determined not to rush into a wrong appointment."

"Steve was down to the last three for the England post when Terry Venables was appointed which shows how highly he is regarded," Lee added.

Coppel's first game in charge of City looks certain to be against Queens Park Rangers at Loftus Road on Saturday.

The two relegated clubs stand 14th and 13th in the first division respectively, with City having been beaten four times in their first five away fixtures.

The Maine Road club were also humiliated 5-1 over two legs by third division Lincoln City in the first round of the Coca-Cola Cup this season.

World Cup qualifiers Italy meet Georgia, England face Poland

PARIS (AFP) — Italian coach Arrigo Sacchi took the plane home from Moldova knowing there was work to be done to make his side competitive for the World Cup finals in two years time.

Sacchi has confessed his tactical mistakes — a 4-3-3 experiment which went horribly wrong — and admitted the sub-standard display by his men in their laboured 3-1 victory on Saturday night in Kishinev.

But four months after their miserable first round exit from the European Championships, he is convinced Italy will do better at home to Georgia on Wednesday, the night group two rivals England face Poland at Wembley.

Sacchi's unheralded three-man attack lasted only 45 minutes, with subdued Parma striker Enrico Chiesa being replaced by Angelo Di Livio, and it took two goals in the last 20 minutes to swing the match Italy's way.

"We suffered a lot in the first half, because of what Moldova were doing right and we were doing wrong," said Sacchi. "We came up against a side who were quick and had a good rhythm to their game."

"They were always first to the ball, while we were not at our best, either individually or collectively. But we improved in the second half, and when Moldova began to fade, we were able to impose our game and our rhythm."

In fact, national pride was salvaged by solid performances from two men — Middlesbrough's Fabrizio Ravanello, who drove home an early free-kick and a late penalty, and Lazio's Pierluigi Casiraghi, who headed in Italy's crucial second and won the 86th minute spot-kick.

But if the three-man attack was a flop, Sacchi cleared the third attacker from any blame.

"It wasn't Chiesa's fault," he said. "If anything, it was mine because I made life more complicated by forcing the team to play to a format which was less familiar to them."

Meanwhile Bobby Gould has vowed that Wales will bounce back from their 3-1 defeat by Holland the same night in Cardiff.

Wales were brought crushing back down to earth after two easy wins against San Marino as the classy Dutch opened their World Cup qualifying campaign with an impressive win.

But Gould insists Wales will take a leaf out of Holland's book for the return match in Rotterdam on November 9.

The defiant Dutch showed a great resolve to bury the painful memories of Euro 96 when they let themselves down on and off the field.

And Gould reckons Wales will adopt the same backs-to-the-wall mentality in Holland.

"We've been hurt, like the Dutch were hurt in Euro 96. They used it as a springboard and we will do the same over there," vowed Gould.

Wales hope to have Ryan Giggs — suspended for Saturday's game — back for the Rotterdam clash, but Mark Hughes is ruled out by suspension after picking up a booking against the Dutch to add to the one he got in San Marino in June.

"It's God's law," groaned Gould. "You get one back and lose another."

John Collins will skipper Scotland for the first time against Estonia in Tallinn on Wednesday in the absence of the suspended Gary McAllister.

Craig Brown on Sunday awarded the honour to the 28-year-old Monaco midfielder after he scored in the 2-0 victory over Latvia in Riga. Darren Jackson hit the other in the 78th minute.

Collins will lead Scotland's search to complete a Baltic double on their group rivals, despite yet more selection problems.

McAllister is banned after collecting his second yellow card in the Daugava Stadium — he was also booked in the 0-0 draw in Austria — while midfielder partner Stuart McCall will almost certainly not be fit.

McCall came off at half-time against Latvia with a hamstring injury which may take a week to heal.

The blows for McCall and McAllister takes to a full team of 11 the absences for Brown as the squad fly to Tallinn.

Out of his original plans



Switzerland's Stephane Chapuisat (right) tries to score a goal against Finland's goalie Antti Niemi during their World Championships qualifier in Helsinki October 6. Switzerland beat Finland 3-2 (Reuters photo)

for this trip are Duncan Ferguson, Ally McCoist, Gordon Durie, Kevin Gallacher, Colin Hendry and Eoin Jess, with three more having long-term injuries: Paul McStay, Scott Booth and Alan McLeish.

"It is not clever but we just have to get on with it," said bullish Brown.

The Northern Irish could only manage a 1-1 draw on Saturday, which leaves them with just one point from their opening two games in group nine, following the defeat by the

Ukraine in August.

Manager Bryan Hamilton now has a mountain to climb — if he stays rather than take over the reins at Manchester City — trying to help the Northern Irish qualify ahead of Germany, their next opponents, and the surprise packet Ukraine, who defeated Portugal 2-1 on Saturday.

The Armenians got off to a flying start with a goal from 30-year-old French-based striker Eric Assadouryan, making his

international debut, after just eight minutes.

But Neil Lennon grabbed the equaliser before half-time when his shot was deflected, leaving goalkeeper Roman Berezhovsky wrong-footed.

Then on Sunday, Switzerland edged Finland 3-2 in Helsinki in group three, while Yugoslavia, now back in the fold, thrashed the Faroe Islands 8-1 at Toftir in group six to keep up their 100 per cent record after three matches.

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WHO DUNNIT?

Both vulnerable, North deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 5 2
♥ 7 3 2
♦ 7 5 4
♣ A K Q

WEST
♠ 10 4
♥ Q J 8 4
♦ A Q J 8
♣ A J 2

EAST
♠ 8 7
♥ K 10 9 5
♦ 8 3 2
♣ 8 8 5 3

SOUTH
♠ K Q 9 6 3
♥ A 6
♦ K 10 9
♣ 10 7 6

The bidding:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♣ Pass 1♣ Pass
2♣ Pass 2♣ Pass
3♣ Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠
Follow the bidding and play of this deal, then decide who, if anyone, committed a gaffe.
One club is the correct opening bid even if you play four-card majors. No response by partner can cause a rebid problem. The rest of the auction is automatic.
West's queen of hearts was allowed to win, declarer taking the

ace on the second round. Trumps were drawn in two rounds, ending in dummy, and the remaining heart was ruffed in the closed hand. The clubs were cleared, and a diamond was led to the nine. In with the jack, West had a choice of losing plays. To continue diamonds would give declarer a trick in the suit, while a heart or a club would allow declarer to ruff in one hand while discarding a diamond from the other. Either way, the defenders would get only one heart and two diamonds.

Declarer played the hand well, but East should not have allowed South that luxury. The defender squandered the most critical asset for the defense at the first trick! Suppose that, at trick one, East were to play the king of hearts on partner's queen. If declarer ducks, East shifts to a diamond. West wins and exits with a heart, and eventually will get two more diamond tricks to score a one-trick set. If declarer wins the first trick, East can still gain the lead in hearts for the diamond play. Again, West will have a safe exit in hearts, so declarer will suffer the same fate of losing three diamond tricks.



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Stalled peace process could fuel extremism, Jordan warns U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Middle East peace process is in danger of becoming mired in hopelessness, Jordan warned on Monday.

"The violation of the sanctity of holy places, the closure of the territories, the denial of work opportunities," and other Israeli policies are frustrating the peace process, Khaled Madadha, minister of state for foreign affairs, told the U.N. General Assembly.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been kept from jobs in Israel because of a seven-month blockade of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In addition, recent violence in those areas has killed 60 Palestinians, 15 Israeli soldiers and three Egyptian soldiers.

The gunbattles were sparked by the opening of a new entrance to tourist tunnel near Muslim holy sites in Arab East Jerusalem.

"These negative factors have started to give rise to a sense of frustration among the peoples of the region," reversing the hope that came with earlier progress toward peace, Mr. Madadha said.

"If we allowed this hope to be lost, a new cycle of violence, instability, terrorism, terrorism and extremism will prevail in the region, as testified by the recent bloody violence," he said.

He called on Israel and the Palestinians to seize on a "ray of hope" to prevent a collapse of the peace process which could lead to a new cycle of instability and terrorism.

Mr. Madadha flayed the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for expanding settlements, violating "the sanctity of holy places" and refusing to implement existing agreements.

He also criticised Israel for halting negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

"In the midst of this gloom which has started to engulf the peace process, there still exists a ray of hope and it behooves us, both Arabs and Israelis, to keep it glittering with a view to securing a better future for our children and grandchildren," he said.

"For if, God forbid, we allowed this hope to be lost, a new cycle of violence, instability, terrorism, terrorism and extremism will prevail in the region, as testified during the recent bloody incidents."

"Let us get back to working together in order not to

kill this baby in its cradle, and kill along with it our people's chances for a better life, which loomed on the horizon after decades of death and destruction," he said.

He also expressed concern about the fate of some three and a half million Palestinian refugees, of whom one and a half million live in Jordan, saying that the problem was a potential "time bomb" for the region.

"It is regrettable that the international community has not given this important political and humanitarian problem its due attention," he said, pointing to the financial problems afflicting the U.N. Relief and Works Agency.

Mr. Madadha said that Jordan was compelled to pay \$300 million annually to help the refugees on its soil.

"As long as it remains without a radical solution, this problem will continue to constitute a time bomb in the context of the peace process... in view of its significant humanitarian and political dimensions," he said.



Palestinians chant and carry the coffin of Raed Ragheb, a Palestinian policeman who died Monday after being wounded in the last month's clashes with Israeli soldiers at Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip (Reuters photo)

Hamas hopes for release of its supporters after intervention by members of Parliament

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Hamas movement on Monday expressed hope that seven Hamas sympathisers and supporters it says detained since late August would be released this week with the return home of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

Ibrahim Ghosheh, the Jordan-based spokesman of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), said the seven included university professor Ibrahim Abu Arkoub and Abdul Aziz Al Omari, editor of the London-based Muslim Palestine magazine.

The other five include two engineers and a student. Mr. Ghosheh said. He did not give their names.

"Contacts have been under way with the prime minister for some time to secure the release of the seven, all of whom are Jordanians," Mr. Ghosheh told the Jordan Times.

"Now that the prime minister is back (from the U.S.

after attending last week's Washington summit), we hope that the seven will be released this week, perhaps in the next two days," he said.

According to Mr. Ghosheh, none of the seven has been formally charged.

No immediate official comment was available.

But local reports said a list of more than 50 people drawn up by the Public Freedoms Committee of the Lower House of Parliament had been sent to the Prime Ministry for a general amnesty by His Majesty King Hussein.

Most of those included in the list are believed to be facing trial in connection with the mid-August unrest over bread and fodder prices in the south.

Others include Leith Shbeilat, president of the Jordan Engineers Association, and Atta Abu Rishteh, a prominent activist of the Hezb Al Tahrir Al Islami (Islamic Liberation Party), both of whom are serving jail terms after being convicted of lese

majestie charges.

Information Minister Marwan Muasher was specifically asked about the status of Mr. Omari at a press briefing on Monday. The minister said he was not fully aware of the circumstances surrounding Mr. Omari's arrest but that he would make available the information to the press soon.

Dr. Muasher added, however, that the government had no role in the detentions and that the matter was up to the judiciary.

"I don't think it is proper for me to comment on cases under investigations by the judiciary," he told the press briefing.

Mr. Ghosheh said all the detained were "sympathisers or supporters" of the Hamas group but "none of them occupied any official position in the movement."

"All office-bearers of the Hamas movement are in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and there is no political office of the group outside the Palestinian territories," said Mr. Ghosheh. "The

presence of the group outside the territories is limited to information offices, supporters and sympathisers of the movement who do not occupy any political position in the group."

Mr. Omari, said Mr. Ghosheh, was the "director of the London-based Muslim Palestinian magazine, which started publishing more than 15 years ago, even before Hamas was founded."

Hamas, which says its activities are limited to the Palestinian territories, is not recognised as a legal movement in Jordan. As such, affiliation to the group is illegal. However, the presence of the Hamas spokesman in the country is tolerated because he is a Jordanian national and he is not involved in Hamas' political activities.

The Kingdom asked two prominent political leaders of the group, Musa Abu Marzouk and Iyad Alami, to leave the country last year.

Mosque opens in Knesset; legislators plan to speak in Arabic on the floor

TEL AVIV (AP) — Arab legislators opened a mosque in the Knesset, Israel's parliament, on Monday, and said they would speak in Arabic on the Knesset floor.

"The Arab public in Israel has reached a stage of maturity, a feeling of independence, and is demanding its rights," said lawmaker Abdul Malik Dahamshe of the United Arab List.

"Not only equal budgets, but also the right to use its language, not surreptitiously, but openly."

Arabic is one of Israel's two official languages, but most official events are conducted only in Hebrew.

Mr. Dahamshe said the 11 Arab legislators will continue making some speeches in Hebrew, "but we want the Arabic language to become acceptable as a matter of routine."

Hashem Mahamid, a legislator from Hadash, the former Communist Party, said Arab legislators speak mostly in Hebrew in order to influence those who do not speak Arabic.

"However, it's time they learned," he said, suggesting that parliament should offer beginners' classes or translation services.

There are nearly one million Arabs in Israel, making

up about 18 per cent of the country's population. There are 11 Israeli Arabs in parliament. Eight are Muslim, although not all of them are religious.

Mr. Dahamshe, who comes from the northern Galilee region, said the opening of the mosque "with God's help... will be a landmark on the road to coexistence and the Arab minority's achieving its rights, especially the Muslim sector."

The mosque was set up in a three-by-four metre windowless office on the ground floor of the parliament building. The only decoration is a poster showing photographs of the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem and the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron, and a stack of rolled-up blue prayer mats on the floor.

Two Arab legislators — Saeb Ahmad and Taleb San'a — holding a black flag of mourning — were thrown out of parliament on Monday for heckling Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his opening speech.

"Your policy is causing war," shouted Mr. Ahmad — in Hebrew.

PNA police reportedly arrest would-be bomber

JERUSALEM (AP) — Security forces of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) have arrested a young Palestinian who was on his way to Jerusalem to blow himself up on an Israeli bus, an Israeli newspaper reported Monday.

Yediot Ahronot said the suspect was arrested last week in the Palestinian-run West Bank town of Bethlehem, eight kilometres south of Jerusalem.

The PNA's West Bank security chief, Jibril Rajoub, would not confirm or deny the report. However, Palestinian police in Bethlehem denied they arrested a would-be suicide bomber last week.

Yigal Pressler, the prime minister's advisor on terrorism, issued a warning Monday to Israelis to be more cautious and alert due to intelligence reports that militants were planning attacks against Israel.

Yediot said the Palestinian suspect was not carrying explosives when he was detained. The report said the man planned to pick up bomb-making equipment from supporters of the militant group Hamas in East Jerusalem.

Reports conflict over detention of Jordanian businessmen in Bosnia

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Confusion on Saturday surrounded the whereabouts of four Jordanian businessmen in Bosnia-Herzegovina after conflicting reports from Sarajevo said the Bosnian authorities have deported 28 people arrested without "proper visas" and that four of them were Jordanians and the rest were Iraqis.

Officials here expressed surprise over the reports and said they were trying to establish the facts in the case.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in Sarajevo that the deportation of the Iraqis came despite fears that they could be forced to return home and face "persecution" from the regime of President Saddam Hussein.

The UNHCR contended that Jordan is not a "safe third country" as far as Iraq is concerned and that the deported Iraqis could face "further deportation" back home.

But Jordan does not have a record of deporting Iraqi dissidents to their home country.

According to the UNHCR, the 28 included four Jordanian businessmen. The identities of the four were not immediately available. The Amman Chamber of Industry and the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce — the two institutions which normally deal with most of the Jordanian businessmen's visits to trade fairs abroad — said they know nothing of the affair.

But a Bosnian government

spokesman said all the 28 were Iraqi nationals and that none of them objected to being sent back to Jordan.

First reports said the group of 28 had gone to Bosnia to attend a trade fair on a visit arranged by the Bosnian diplomatic mission in Amman and that they were arrested on Tuesday, three days after they landed there on charges that they did not have entry visas.

On Monday, Kris Janowski, a UNHCR spokesman, said the group included 24 Iraqi and four Jordanians and that they were flown back to Jordan on Sunday aboard a charter flight.

Airport sources in Amman could not confirm or deny whether the flight had actually landed here.

Mr. Janowski said the Bosnian government refused requests from his organisation to interview the group to see if they feared harm back home and were seeking political asylum.

But Bosnian government spokesman Mirza Hajric said all 28 went back to Jordan of their own volition.

"None of them said they had any problem with being flown back," said Mr. Hajric. "None of them asked for political asylum."

When the group were arrested a week ago, Bosnian police said that four were from Jordan, but Mr. Hajric insisted all were Iraqis.

Information Minister Marwan Muasher and Transport Minister Nasser

Kuwaitis vote in relaxed mood in assembly polls

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti men voted on Monday in a relaxed mood, eating gourmet food offered by candidates while some 200 women demonstrated for political rights in the emirate, which reintroduced a parliament after the 1991 Gulf war.

"We can't vote, do you want us to be denied food also?" joked a police officer as he enjoyed a lunch offered by a candidate and supplied by a five-star hotel.

Police and military personnel, Kuwaitis under 21, those naturalised less than 20 years ago and women — over 50 per cent of Kuwaitis — cannot vote. Only a seventh of 700,000 Kuwaitis can vote in the only parliament poll in a Gulf Arab state.

Many of the Islamist, liberal, independent, pan-Arab nationalist and pro-government candidates set up tents on Monday around polling stations to lure voters in with a free lunch and a last chance to influence their final decision.

"I do not have the figures yet but I could have spent more than a deputy's salary for the next four years... I have spent a lot of my own money," said candidate Abdullah Al Roumi. The liberal Roumi is running a tough reelection battle against fellow Muslim Sunni and Shi'ite candidates. There are 25 constituencies in Kuwait with two seats for each.

"This is the nature of democracy in Kuwait... Election campaigns are hot but on election day things are calm and the competition is honest," he told Reuters.

Political parties are not officially allowed in Kuwait where, after the parliament's election, the cabinet will be formed by Kuwait's ruling Al

Sabah family.

During the month-long election campaign candidates offered a variety of political schools at rallies often followed by expensive dinners for thousands of potential male supporters.

But women are trying to gain the right to take part. "Equality and justice" read a banner held by a group of female activists in front of a polling station.

Some Western diplomats say the activists were mainly elite women with little grass-root support.

"I think they are going about it the wrong way," one said.

"The right to vote and run for parliament should be their final goal not the starting point. They should first seek changes and gain social rights and improve conditions for women, leading to their eventual participation in elections."

When asked if women should be allowed to vote, a supporter of an Islamist, tribal candidate said: "We should not open the door to sin-inducing practices."

Although women's rights was debated by some candidates analysts say the main issues are security and the economy.

Parliament's political adviser Abdullah Al Shaveji told Reuters last month's tension between Washington and Baghdad and the October 1994 Iraqi buildup on the border showed Kuwaitis how vulnerable their small country was, pushing "genuine security concerns to the front burner."

Some of the new deputies are expected to press for further defence measures to deter Iraq, while also seeking stronger powers to monitor state spending and tackle alleged corruption.

COLUMN 8

36 million Indians are homeless

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Some 36 million Indians are homeless, a figure that increases by one million a year due to the country's population explosion, a minister said in remarks published Monday. "Massive efforts and investment are required to meet the housing needs of the people," Minister of State for Urban Affairs U. Venkateswarlu told a seminar here Sunday. "The number of homeless is almost equivalent to the combined population of Iraq and Afghanistan," the Times of India quoted him as saying.

No poison in Italy's parliament — official

ROME (R) — Poisonous the debates in Italy's parliament may be but the assembly insisted Sunday that there was nothing wrong with the food. An official statement from the Chamber of Deputies (lower house) said the parliament snack bar would reopen Monday after being shut for two days to be disinfected. The closure followed the discovery during a routine health inspection that two of the snack bar staff were carriers of the salmonella bacteria. The statement said tests had shown that they could not pass on salmonella, a form of food poisoning.

Writers lead charge against German language reform

FRANKFURT (R) — Some of Germany's leading writers, including novelist Guenter Grass, called for reform of the German language to be abandoned and linguistic traditions to be left in peace. The authors said the reform, agreed in Vienna in July by Germany, Austria, Switzerland and representatives of other German-speaking communities, was superfluous and would merely cost money at a time when few people had cash to spare. In a so-called "Frankfurt declaration," released to coincide with the huge book fair in the city, they said the reform had been prepared by a "largely anonymous group of experts" and would cause "confusion for decades." Advocates of the reform say it simplifies and standardises many ancient rules of grammar and spelling in the language, making it easier for both natives and foreigners to master.

Mayoral candidate in manhole cover probe

BOGOTA (R) — Police briefly detained a Bogota mayoral candidate after they discovered a number of manhole covers in his truck. More than 14,000 of the steel and concrete covers, the property of city hall and public utilities, have been stolen this year across the Colombian capital. Pedestrians have been petrified by the new crime fad which has left gaping holes on the streets — one woman had to be rescued by police last month after falling 10 metres with her weekly shopping into the drain below. Carlos Moreno, who made an unsuccessful bid for the mayor's post in 1994 and will run again in 1998, was released after a short interrogation, a police spokesman said. "We found him in possession of a number of manhole covers. He showed us a receipt and said he bought them in good faith. The place was closed today so we still do not know how these covers came to be on sale to the public," the spokesman said.

Turkey denies links with Iran-held 'spy'; Rafsanjani says no help for PKK rebels

ANKARA (AP) — The Foreign Ministry on Monday denied that its diplomats had any connection with an alleged spy arrested in Iran.

"Such allegations of course are totally false. Turkish diplomats in foreign countries do not engage in those sort of activities. It is out of the question," Sermet Ataculhi, the ministry spokesman, told a news conference.

Mr. Ataculhi said they have not received any information or request from the Iranian side on the issue so far.

On Sunday the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) of Iran reported that Iranian authorities had arrested a man on charges of spying for Turkey in the western Iranian city of Orumiyyeh.

The agency said the man was to seek the help of the Turkish embassy in Tehran if he encountered any problems.

His name or nationality were not given and the date of the arrest was not clear.

It was the second spy allegation against Turkey by Iran in six months.

In April, Turkey asked Iran to withdraw four Iranian diplomats implicated in the assassination of a secular writer by a suspected Turkish Islamic terrorist.

In retaliation, Iran claimed that a spy ring broken up by its police was led by four Turkish diplomats.

The dispute between the two countries ended with the withdrawal of four diplomats by each side.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said meanwhile that his

country will not authorise any activity against Turkey from Iranian soil.

"Iran attaches great importance to keeping the peace and the security of its borders with Turkey," the president said in a meeting with Ankara's ambassador to Tehran, Mithat Balkan.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller, in talks with her Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati last month, asked for Iran to stop the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) from using its territory as a base for cross-border raids.

Mr. Rafsanjani, quoted by Tehran Radio, called for "a high-degree of border cooperation" between the two countries. The meeting with Mr. Balkan took place at the end of the ambassador's term in Iran, the radio said.

(Continued on page 7)